# SACRAMENTAL MEDITATIONS

Upon divers ſelect places

OF

# SCRIPTURE

WHEREIN

Believers are aſſiſted in preparing their hearts, and exciting their affections and graces, when they draw nigh to God in that moſt awful and ſolemn Ordinance of the

## Lords Supper.

By Jo. FLAVEL,
Miniſter of Chriſt in *DEVON.*

Cant. 4. 16. *Awake, O North wind, and come thou South, blow upon my Garden, that the ſpices thereof may flow out. Let my Beloved come into his Garden and eat his pleaſant fruit.*

*London*, Printed for *Jacob Sampſon* next door to the *Wonder Tavern* in *Ludgate-ſtreet*, 1679.

# THE EPISTLE TO THE READER.

Christian Reader,

CHrist may be said to be Crucified three ways; by the Jews actually, in the Sacrament Declaratively, and by Unbelievers at his Table Interpretatively. Among sins, Blood-guiltiness is reckoned one of the most heinous, and of all Blood-guiltiness to be guilty of the Blood of Christ, is a sin of the deepest guilt, and will be avenged with the most dreadful punishment, 1 Cor. 11. 27, 29. If Vengeance be taken sevenfold on

*him that* Slew Cain, *what Vengeance shall be taken on him* that Crucifies afresh the Lord of glory?

*The heavieſt blow of Divine Juſtice is ſtill ready to avenge the Abuſe of the beſt mercy. What can the heart of man conceive more ſolemn, more ſacred, or more deeply affective than the repreſentation of the greateſt love of the* Father, *and the moſt grievous paſſions of the* Son? *What ſin can be more provoking to God, than the ſlight and contempt of theſe moſt awful Myſteries? and what puniſhment can be more terrible, than for ſuch a wretched ſoul to eat and drink Damnation to it ſelf?*

Melanchthon *records a very dreadful example of God's righteous Judgment upon a Company of Prophane wretches, who in a* Tragedy *intended to act the death of Chriſt upon the Croſs. He that acted the Soldiers part, inſtead of piercing with his Spear a Bladder full of blood hid under the Garment, wounded him to death that was upon the Croſs; who falling down, killed him, who (in a diſguiſe) acted*

acted the part of the Woman that stood mailing under the Cross. His Brother who was first slain, slew the Murderer, who acted the Soldiers part; and for slaying him, was himself hanged by order of Justice. Thus did the Vengeance of God speedily overtake them, and hang'd them up in Chains, for a warning to all that should ever dare to dally with the great and jealous God.

These are terrible strokes, and yet not so terrible as those which are more ordinarily, but less sensibly inflicted upon the inner man for the Abuse of this Ordinance.

To prevent these Judgments, and obtain those blessings which come through this Ordinance, great regard must be had to two things, viz.

1. The Inbeing } of true Grace.
2. The Activity }

1. Examine thy self Reader, whether there be any gracious principle planted in thy soul, whereby thou art alive indeed unto

God

*God. It was an ancient abuse of the Sacrament (condemned and cast out by the Carthaginian Council) to give it unto dead men. Dead souls can have no Communion with the living God; no more benefit from this Table, than the Emperors Guests had from his Table, where Loaves of Gold were set before them to eat. There is more than a shew of grace in the Sacrament; it hath not only the visible sign, but the spiritual grace also which it represents. See that there be more than a shew and visible sign of grace also in thy soul, when thou comest nigh to the Lord in that Ordinance.*

Concil Carthag. Can. 6. *Placuit ut defunctorum corporibus non detur Eucharistia*, &c.

*See to the exercise and activity, as well as to the truth and sincerity of thy grace. Even a Believer himself doth not eat and drink worthily, unless the grace that is in him be excited and exercised at this Ordinance. It is not Faith inhereing, but Faith realizing, applying and powerfully working. It is not a dispasition to humiliation for sin, but the actual thaw-*

*thawing and melting of the heart for sin, whilst thou* lookest on him whom thou hast pierced, and mourn'st for him, as one that mourneth for his only Son, for his First-born. *Nor is it a disposition or principal of love to Christ that is only required, but the stirring up of that fire of love, the exciting of it into a vehement flame.*

*I know the excitations and exercises of grace are attended with great difficulties. They are not things within our command, and at our beck. O! 'tis hard 'tis hard indeed, Reader, even after God hath taken the heart of stone out of thee, and given thee an heart of flesh, to mourn actually for sin, even when so great an occasion and call is given thee to that work at the Lords Table; for the same power is requisite to excite the act that was required to plant the habit.* Gratia gratiam postulat.

*However, the duty is thine, though the power be Gods; why else are his people blamed, because they stirred not up themselves to take hold of him?* Isa. 64. 7.

To

# To the Reader.

*To assist thee in this work, some help is offered in the following Meditations. 'Tis true, it is not the reading of the best Meditations another can prepare for thee, that will alter the temper of thy heart, except the Spirit of God concur with these truths, and bless them to thy soul: But yet these helps must not be slighted, because they are not self-sufficient. Man lives not by Bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God; yet it were a fond Vanity and Sin for any man upon that ground to cast away Bread, and expect to live by a word without it. We must lift up our hearts to God for a Blessing, and then eat; do the same here, first pray, then read, and the Lord quicken thee by it for duty.*

*There are two things of special concernment to the Reader, when thou art to address thy self to any solemn duty, especially such as this.*

*Prepare for thy duty diligently.*

2. *Rely not upon thy preparations.*

*First*: *Prepare with all diligence for thy duty; take pains with thy dull heart, cleanse thy polluted heart; compose thy vain heart; remember how great a presence thou art approaching.* If Augustus *thus reproved one that entertained him without ſutable preparation,* ſaying, I did not think we had been ſo familiar; *much more may thy* God *reprove thee for thy careleſs neglect of due preparation for him.*

Non putabam me tibi tam familiarem.

*Secondly*: *But yet take heed on the other ſide, that thou rely not upon thy beſt preparations. It is an ingenious and true* note *of* Luther, *ſpeaking to this very point of preparation for the* Sacrament; *never are men more unfit, than when they think themſelves moſt fit, and beſt prepared for their duty; never more fit, than when moſt humbled and aſhamed in the ſenſe of their own unfitneſs.*

Tunc peſſimè diſpoſitus quando aptiſimè.

That

# To the Reader.

*That the blessing of God, and the breathings of his good Spirit, may accompany these poor labours to thy soul, is the hearts desire of*

**Thy Servant in Christ,**

**JOHN FLAVEL.**

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**SA-**

# SACRAMENTAL MEDITATIONS, &c.

## The First Meditation UPON

**Psal. 89. 7.** *God is greatly to be feared in the Assembly of his Saints, and to be had in Reverence of all that are about him.*

THERE are special Seasons wherein the Saints approach near unto God in this Life, and wherein the Lord comes near unto them.

It pleaseth the Majesty of Heaven sometimes to admit poor Worms of the Earth to such sensible and sweet per-

ceptions of himself, as are found above all expressions, and seems to be a transient glance upon that glory, which glorified eyes more steadily behold above, *Believing we rejoyce with joy unspeakable, and full of glory, or glorified joy*, as it is, 1 Pet. 1. 8. And yet how sweet and excellent soever these foretasts of Heaven are, Heaven it self will be an unspeakable surprize to the Saints, when they shall come thither.

Ἀγαλλιᾶσθε χαρᾷ ἀνεκλαλήτῳ καὶ δεδοξασμένῃ, Inennarabile & glorificata. *Montan.*

Now among all those Ordinances, wherein the Blessed God manifests himself to the Children of Men, none are found to set forth more of the joy of his Presence, than that of the *Lords Supper*: At that blessed Table are such sensible embraces betwixt Christ and Believers, as do afford a delight and solace beyond the joy of the whole Earth.

And where such special manifestations of God are, suitable dispositions and preparations should be found on our part to meet the Lord.

And certainly, we shall find reason enough for it, if we well consider the importance of this Scripture before us, *God is greatly to be feared in the Assembly of his Saints, and to be had in Reverence of*

*of all that are round about him*; wherein we have

The { 1. Object, 2. Subject, 3. Mode } of divine Worship.

First, The *Object* of Worship, God; God is to be feared: In all divine Worship Men and Angels have to do with God. *All things* (saith the Apostle) *are open and naked to the eyes of him, with whom we have to do*, Heb. 4. 13. *with whom we have speech or business.* So it may be sensed, when we Worship, we draw nigh to God, and that about the greatest concerns and weightiest businesses in the world. 1.

Secondly, The *Subject*, or the Persons that approach unto God in his worship, *his Saints*, and *all that are about him.* By *Saints*, many *Interpreters* do in this place understand the *Angels*, called *Saints* from the purity and holiness of their Nature; and so make the next clause exegetical of this. Those that before were call'd Saints in respect of their *Nature*, are in the next words said to be such as are round about him; his *Satellites*, Attendants, or 2.

those that ſtand as Servants about him, to do his pleaſure where they are deſcribed by their *Office*; and both theſe ſeem to be grounded upon the precedent Verſes. *Who in the Heaven can be compared to the Lord? Who among the Sons of the Mighty* (or of God) ſo the Angels are call'd, *Job* 1. 6. *can be likened to the Lord?* And though it be true, that the *Angels* worſhip and ſerve the Lord with greateſt reverence and dread (for theſe are *his nigh Ones*, or ſuch as are round about him) yet there is no neceſſity to limit this Scripture ſo narrowly, by excluding the people of God on Earth; they alſo are his Saints, and more frequently ſo ſtiled, though they be Saints of a lower Claſs and Order; and they alſo are round about him as well as the *Angels*, and when they worſhip him, he is in the midſt of them, *Matth.* 18. 20. and the place where they Aſſemble to worſhip, is call'd the place of his Feet, *Iſa.* 60. 13. But if we find not the Saints on Earth in the direct and immediate ſenſe of this Text, yet we muſt needs meet them in the rebound and conſequence: For if Creatures ſo much above us as the Angels, do perform their Ser-

Service, and pay their Homage to the higheſt Majeſty with ſo much fear and reverence, ſhall not inferiour Creatures, the poor Worms of the Earth, tremble at his preſence? And this brings us to the third thing.

Namely, the *Mode*, or manner in which the Worſhip of God is to be performed, *viz.* With great fear and reverence. *God is greatly to be feared*; *Piſcator* Tranſlates it *Vehementer formidandus*, to be vehemently feared; and oppoſes it to that formal, careleſs, trifling, vain ſpirit, which too often is found in thoſe that approach the Lord in the duties of his Worſhip. 3.

The Obſervation from hence will be this.

## *Obſervation.*

*That the greateſt compoſedneſs and ſeriouſneſs of ſpirit is due to God, from all thoſe that draw nigh unto him in his Worſhip.*

And this is no more than what the Lord expreſly requires at our hands, *Levit.* 10. 3. *I will be Sanctified in them that come nigh unto me:* So *Heb.* 12. 28. *Let us have Grace, whereby we may ſerve*

*God acceptably, with reverence and Godly fear, for our God is a Conſuming fire.*

And as this diſpoſition and temper of ſpirit is due to every act and part of Gods Worſhip, ſo (to accommodate this general to our particular occaſion) it is eſpecially due, to this great and ſolemn Ordinance of the Lords Supper.

It is the Obſervation of the *Caſuiſts*, that *Sacramentum & mortis articulus æquiparantur*, the Sacrament of the Lords Supper, and the very point of death require equal ſerioufneſs; a mans ſpirit ſhould be as deeply ſolemn and compoſed at the *Lords Table*, as upon a Dead-bed: We ſhould go to that Ordinance, as if we were then going into another world.

The Primitive Chriſtians uſed to ſit up whole Nights in Meditation and Prayer, before their participation of the Lords Supper; and theſe Nights were call'd *Vigiliæ*, their Watches. Such was the Reverence the Saints had for this Ordinance (which they uſually call'd *myſterium tremendum*, a tremendous Myſtery) that they would not give ſleep to their eyes, or ſlumber to their eye-lids, when ſo great and ſolemn a day drew near. And

*Chryſoſt. lib. 3. de Sacerdot.*

And that all this ſolemn preparation is no more than needs, will convincingly appear to us upon the following grounds and reaſons.

Firſt, From the *ſolemn nature* and ends of this Ordinance; for what is the expreſs deſign and uſe of it, but a lively repreſentation of the Lords death, 1 *Cor.* 11. 26. *As often as ye eat this Bread, and drink this Cup, ye do ſhew the Lords death till he come.* Jeſus Chriſt is therein ſet forth Crucified before us, and not to make a bare repreſentation of it to us, as a thing wherein we have no perſonal intereſt or concernment, but to repreſent his *death lively*, and ſeal our title to it *firmly*: *This is my body which is broken for you*, ver. 24. *Reaſ.* 1.

Now which of theſe is to be attended with a dead, careleſs, and ſlight ſpirit? Is't the repreſentation of Chriſts death? God forbid. O, if there be any ſubject of Meditation in the world able to drink up the very ſpirits of a man, this is it.

The Sun fainted, the Heavens mourn'd in black, the very Rocks rent in pieces when this *Tragedy* was acted; and ſhall our hearts be more ſenſeleſs and obdurate than they at the repreſentation of it? But loe, here is more than

a repreſentation; Chriſt is ſet forth in this Ordinance *as Crucified for you*, as ſuffering and enduring all this in your room and ſtead: Now,

Suppoſe, Reader, thy ſelf to be juſtly Condemned to the torture of the *Rack*, or *Strappado*; and that thy Father, Brother, or deareſt Friend preferring thy life to his own, would become thy Ἀντίψυχος, *Ranſomer*, by undergoing the torment for thee; and all that is left for thee to ſuffer, were only by way of Sympathy with him? Suppoſe now thy ſelf ſtanding by that Engine of Torture, and beholding the members of thy dear Friend diſtorted, and all out of joynt, hearing the doleful groans extorted by the extremity of anguiſh; and under all theſe torments, ſtill maintaining a conſtant love to thee, not once repenting his torments for thee; couldſt thou ſtand there with dry eyes? could thy heart be unaffected and ſtupid at ſuch a ſight? Write him rather a Beaſt, a Stone, than a Man, that could do ſo.

But this is not all: The Believers intereſt in Chriſt is *Sealed*, as well as the ſufferings of Chriſt repreſented in this Ordinance.

And

And is a Sealed Intereſt in Chriſt, ſo cheap or common a thing, as that it ſhould not engage, yea, ſwallow up all the powers of thy ſoul! O what is this! What is this?

The Seal of God ſet to the Soul of a poor Sinner, to confirm and ratifie its title to the Perſon of Chriſt, and the ineſtimable treaſures of his Blood! Surely as the Sealing up of a man to Damnation, is the ſum of all miſery, and that poor Creature that is ſo Sealed hath cauſe enough to mourn and wail to Eternity: So the ſealing up of a ſoul to Salvation, is the ſum of all mercy and happineſs; and the Soul that is ſo ſealed, hath cauſe enough to lie at the feet of God, over-whelmed with the ſenſe of ſo invaluable a mercy.

Secondly: As the nature and ends of the Ordinance call for the greateſt compoſedneſs of ſpirit, ſo the danger of unworthy receiving ſhould work our hearts to the moſt ſerious frames: For if a man be here without his Wedding-garment, if he eat and drink unworthily, it is at the greateſt peril of his ſoul that he doth ſo, 1 *Cor.* 11. 27. *Wherefore whoſoever ſhall eat this Bread, and drink this Cup of the Lord unworthily,* 2. *Reaſ.*

*ſhall be guilty of the Body and Blood of the Lord.*

To prophane and undervalue that Body and Blood of the Lord, is a ſin above meaſure ſinful, and the puniſhments of ſuch ſins will be moſt dreadful; for ſtill, the more excellent the Bleſſings are that come by any Ordinance, the more dreadful the Curſes are that avenge the abuſe of ſuch mercies. How ſoon may a man draw fearful guilt upon his ſoul, and dreadful judgments upon his body, by an heedleſs management of ſuch ſacred myſteries! *For this cauſe many are weak and ſickly among you, and many ſleep*, ver. 30.

*Mr.* Tho. Goodwins *Epiſtle to Mr.* Fenners *Sermon.*

It is a moſt weighty Note that a worthy Pen ſets upon this Scripture; they diſcerned not the Body of his Son Jeſus Chriſt in his Ordinances; but inſtead of that holy, reverend, and deepdyed behaviour which was due to it, both from their inner and outward man, as being a Creature of the higheſt and deepeſt Sanctification that ever God Sanctified; Sanctified not only to a more excellent and glorious condition, but alſo to many ends and purpoſes, of far higher and dearer concernment, both for the glory of God, and bene-

benefit of men themſelves, than all other Creatures whatſoever, whether in Heaven or Earth: they handled and dealt by it in both kinds, as if it had been a common or unſanctified thing: Thus they diſcerned not the Lords Body.

And as they diſcerned not his Body, ſo neither did God (in ſome ſenſe) diſcern theirs; but in thoſe ſore Strokes, and heavy Judgments which he inflicted on them, had them in no other regard or conſideration, than as if they had been the bodies of his Enemies, the bodies of wicked and ſinful men. Thus drawing the model and plat-form of their puniſhment (as uſually he doth) from the ſtructure and proportion of their ſin.

Thus the Juſt and Righteous God builds up the breaches that we make upon the honour belonging to the body of his Son, with the ruins of that honour which he had given unto ours, in health, ſtrength, life, and many other outward comforts and ſupports.

O then what need is there of a moſt awful and compoſed ſpirit, when we approach the Lord in this Ordinance!

Thirdly:

Thirdly: As the danger of unworthy receiving ſhould compoſe us to the greateſt ſerioufneſs, ſo the remembrance of that frame and temper Chriſts ſpirit was in, when he actually ſuffered thoſe things for us, ſhould compoſe our ſpirits into a frame more ſuitable and agreeable to his; when we ſee his death, as it were, acted over again before our eyes, was his heart roving and wandering in that day? Did he not ſenſe and mind the work he was going about? Was his heart like thine, ſtupid and unaffected with theſe things? Look but upon that Text, *Luke* 22. 44. and you ſhall ſee whether it were ſo or no. It's ſaid (when this *Tragedy* drew nigh, and his Enemies were ready to ſeize him in the Garden) *That being in an Agony, he prayed more earneſtly, and his ſweat was, as it were, great drops of Blood falling down to the ground:* And *Matth.* 26. 38. he ſaith, *My ſoul is exceeding ſorrowful, even unto death.* His ſoul was full of ſorrow, and is thine full of ſtupidity? God forbid.

If thy heart be cold, Chriſt's was hot: If thou canſt not ſhed a tear, he poured out clods of blood from every part. Oh! how unſuitable is a dry eye,

eye, and an hard heart to ſuch an Ordinance as this!

Fourthly: As the frame Chriſts ſpirit was in, at his death, ſhould command the moſt ſolemn frame upon our ſpirits, at the recognizing of it, ſo the things here repreſented, require and call for the higheſt exerciſe of every grace of the ſpirit in our ſouls; for we come not thither as idle *Spectators*, but as active *Inſtruments* to glorifie God by exerciſing every grace upon Chriſt, as Crucified for us. 4. *Reaſ.*

Behold here among the reſt,

1. The proper object of Faith.
2. The flowing ſpring of Repentance.
3. The powerful attractive of Love.

Firſt: The *proper object of Faith* is here. This Ordinance, as a glaſs, repreſents to thine eye that glorious Perſon, of whom the Father ſaid, *This is my Beloved Son, in whom I am well pleaſed*, Matth. 17. 5. Of whom he ſaid, *I have laid help upon one that is mighty.* This was he that *was made Sin for us, who had no Sin, that we might be made the Righteouſneſs of God in him*, 2 Cor. 5. 21. Who trod the Wine-preſs- 1.

preſs alone, and is here to be ſeen in his red Garments: Every drop of his precious Blood hath a tongue calling for Faith to behold it, poured forth as a Sacrifice to God for ſin. *This* (ſaith he) *is the cup of the New Teſtament in my Blood, which was ſhed for many for the remiſſion of ſin.*

And what footing could thy Faith find for Pardon and Salvation any where elſe? 'Tis Chriſt Crucified that Faith claſpes as the laſt and only hope, and refuge of a poor Sinner. Here all Believers drop Anchor: This is that bleſſed object on whom they take the dead gripe, or laſt graſp, when their eye-ſtrings and heart-ſtrings are breaking. When you ſee the Blood of Chriſt flowing forth, how can Faith be ſilent in thy ſoul? When he bids thee, as it were, to put thy finger into his ſide, ſhews thee his hands and his feet there, it will cry out in thy ſoul, my Lord, and my God.

2. Secondly: The flowing ſpring of Repentance is here, if there be any fire that can melt, or hammer that can break a hard heart, here it is, *Zech.* 12. 10. *They ſhall look upon me whom they have pierced, and mourn.* Nothing laies

a gracious ſoul lower in it ſelf, than to ſee how low Chriſt was laid in his Humiliation for it.

Here the evil of ſin is alſo repreſented in the cleareſt glaſs that ever the eye of man ſaw it in. The ſufferings of the Son of God diſcover the evil of ſin more than the everlaſting torments of the Damned can do. So that if there be but one drop of Spiritual ſorrow in the heart of a Chriſtian, here me-thinks it ſhould be ſeen dropping from the eye of Faith.

Thirdly: The moſt *attractive* object of love is here: Put all Created Beauties, Excellencies and Perfections together, and what are they but blackneſs and deformity compared with lovely Jeſus? *My Beloved* (ſaith the enamour'd Spouſe) *is white and ruddy*, Cant. 5. 10. Behold him at the Table in his perfect Innocency, and unparallel'd ſufferings. This is he *who was rich, but for our ſakes became poor, that we through his poverty might be rich*, 2 Cor. 8. 9. This is he that parted with his honour firſt, and his life next; yea, he parted with his honour in his Incarnation, that he might be capable to part with his life for our Redemption. 3.

Be-

Behold here the degrees of his Sufferings, and by them measure the degrees of his Love. Behold in his death, as in the Deluge all the Fountains beneath, and the Windows of Heaven above opened; the Wrath of God, the Cruelty of Men, the fury of Hell breaking in together upon him, and his soul surrounded with sorrow: And how can this be represented, and thy soul not astonished at this amazing matchless love of Christ? Surely one flame doth not more naturally produce another, than the love of Christ thus represented to a gracious soul, doth produce love to Christ, and that in the most intense degree.

## Use 1.

1. Use. How naturally doth this Doctrine shame and humble the best hearts for their sinful discomposures, vanity, and deadness; for the rovings and wanderings of their hearts, even when they come near the Lord in such a solemn Ordinance as this is?

The Holiest man upon Earth may lay his hand upon his breast, and say, Lord, how unsultable is this heart of mine

mine, to ſuch an object of Faith as is here preſented to me? Doth ſuch a temper of ſpirit ſuit thine awful preſence? Should the repreſented Agonies and ſufferings of Chriſt for me, be beheld with a ſpirit no more concerned, pierced and wounded for ſin? O how can I look upon him whom I have pierced, and not mourn, and be in bitterneſs for him, as for an only Son, a Firſt-born! O the ſtupifying and benumming power of ſin! Oh the efficacy of Unbelief!

It was charged upon the *Iſraelites*, as the great aggravation of their ſin, that they *provoked God at the Sea, even at the red Sea*, the place where their miraculous Salvation was wrought. But Lord Jeſus, my hard heart provokes thee in an higher degree, even at the red Sea of thy precious invaluable Blood, by which my eternal Salvation was wrought. O my God, what a heart have I? Did the Blood of Chriſt run out ſo freely and abundantly for me, and cannot I ſhed one tear for my ſins that pierced him? O let me never be Friends with my own heart, till it love Chriſt better, and hate ſin more. Pſal. 106. 7.

*Uſe*.

Use 2.

## Use 2.

This Scripture hath also an awaking voice to all that come nigh to God in any of his Ordinances, especially in this Ordinance. O Christians! bethink your selves where you are, and what you are doing: Know you not that the King comes in to see the Guests? Yea, you do know that God is in this place; an awful Majesty beholds you. *All the Churches shall know that I am he that searcheth the heart and the reins, and will give to every one as his work shall be*, Rev. 2. 23.

Thy business, Christian, is not with Men, but with God, and the solemnest business that ever thy thoughts were versant about. Thou art here to recognize the sufferings of thy Redeemer, to take the seals and pledges of thy Salvation from the hand of his spirit; imagine the same thing which is now to be done spiritually, and by the ministry of Faith, were but to be performed visibly and audibly by the ministry of thy sense.

Suppose Jesus Christ did personally shew himself at this Table, and were pleas'd

pleas'd to make himself known in breaking of Bread, as once he did to the Disciples. Suppose thou saweſt him appear at this Table, as he now doth appear in Heaven, *as a Lamb that had been ſlain*? Imagine thou heardeſt him ſay, Believer, this precious Blood of mine was ſhed for thee; there be Millions of Men and Women in the world naturally as good as thee, that ſhall have no intereſt in it, or benefit by it: But for thee it was ſhed, and for the remiſſion of thy ſins; my Blood was the only thing in the world that was equal to the demerit of thy ſins, and it hath made full ſatisfaction to God for them all: Thy ſins which are many, are therefore forgiven thee; my Blood hath purchaſed the eternal Inheritance of glory for thee; and this day I am come to deliver the ſeals and pledges thereof into thine hand. Take then the ſeals of eternal Salvation this day: Take thine own Chriſt with all that he is and hath in thine arms: Whatever I have ſuffered, done, or procured for any of my Saints, I have ſuffered, done, and procured the ſame for thee. Why, all this is here to be done as really and truly, though in a more

more ſpiritual way, at this Table; and ſhall not ſuch buſineſs as this is fully fix and engage thy heart? What then ſhall do it?

Awake Faith; awake Repentance; awake Love; yea, let all the powers of my ſoul be throughly awakened this day, to attend the Lord.

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THE

## THE SECOND
# MEDITATION
## UPON

Jer. 12. 2. *Thou art near in their mouth, and far from their reins.*

THIS Scripture gives us the Character and deſcription of an *Hypocrite*, and he is here deſcribed two ways, *viz.* 1. By what he hath. 2. By what he hath not.

Firſt: The Hypocrite is deſcribed by what he hath; he hath God in his mouth: *Thou art near in their mouth*, (i. e.) they profeſs with a full mouth, that they are thy People, ſaith *Piſcator*; or, they ſpeak much about the Law (as another ſenſes it) God, and his Temple, Religion with its rites are much talked of among them, they have him 1.

in

in their prayers and duties; and this is all that the Hypocrite hath of God. Religion only ſanctifies his tongue that ſeems to be dedicated to God, but it penetrates no farther; and therefore,

2. Secondly: He is deſcribed by that he hath not, or by what he wants; *And*, or *but thou art far from their reins*, (i. e.) they feel not the powers and influences of that name which they ſo often invocate and talk of, going down to their very reins, and affecting their very hearts; ſo we muſt underſtand this Metaphorical expreſſion here, as the oppoſition directs. For the reins having ſo great and ſenſible a ſympathy with the heart, which is the ſeat of affections and paſſions, upon that account it is uſual in Scripture, to put the reins for thoſe intimate and ſecret affections, thoughts, and paſſions of the heart, with which they have ſo near cognation, and ſo ſenſible a ſympathy. When the heart is under great conſternation, the loins or reins are ſeiz'd alſo, as *Dan.* 5. 6. Then that *Kings Countenance was changed, and his thoughts troubled him, and the joynts of his loins were looſed.* On the contrary, when the heart is fill'd

fill'd with delight and gladneſs, the reins are ſaid to rejoyce, *Prov.* 23. 16. *Yea, my reins ſhall rejoyce when thy lips ſpeak right things*, totus lætitiâ diſſiliam. I ſhall even leap for joy. So then, when the *Prophet* ſaith, God is far from the reins of the Hypocrite, the meaning is, he feels not the heart-affecting influence and power of Religion upon his heart and affections, as Gods People do. And hence the Note will be.

*That God comes nearer to the hearts and reins of his People in their duties, than he doth to any Hypocritical, or formal Profeſſor.* *Doct.*

By Gods nearneſs, we underſtand not his *Omnipreſence*, that neither comes nor goes; nor his *love* to his People, that abides, but the ſenſible ſweet manifeſtations and out-lets of it to their ſouls. So in *Pſal.* 145. 18. *The Lord is nigh unto all that call upon him, unto all that call upon him in truth.*

Note the reſtriction and limitation of this glorious priviledge; 'tis the peculiar enjoyment of ſincere, and upright-hearted Worſhippers. Others may have Communion with duties, but not with God in them. But

But that God comes nigh, very nigh to upright hearts in their duties, is a truth as ſenſibly manifeſt to ſpiritual perſons, as that they are nigh the fire when they feel the comfortable heat of it refreſhing them in a cold ſeaſon, when they are almoſt ſtarved and benumed with cold.

Three things make this evident.

1. Firſt: Sincere ſouls are ſenſible of Gods *acceſſes* to them in their duties; they feel his approaches to their ſpirits. *Lam.* 3. 57. *Thou dreweſt near in the day that I called upon thee; thou ſaidſt, fear not.* And what a ſurprize was that to the Church? *Cant.* 2. 8. *It is the Voice of my Beloved, behold he cometh,* &c. Certainly there is a felt preſence of God, which no words can make another to underſtand; they feel the Fountain flowing abundantly into the dry pits, the heart fills apace, the empty thoughts ſwell with a fulneſs of ſpiritual things which ſtrive for vent.

2. Secondly: They are ſenſible of Gods *receſſes*, and withdrawments from their ſpirits, they feel how the ebb follows the flood, and how the waters abate. So you find it in *Cant.* 5. 6. *I opened to my Beloved, but my Beloved had with-*

*withdrawn himself, and was gone, my soul failed when he spake: I sought him, but I could not find him; I called, but he gave me no answer.* The Hebrew is very Pathetical, *He was gone, he was gone.* A sad change of the frame of her heart quickly followed.

Thirdly: The Lords nearness to the hearts and reins of his People in their duties, is evident to them from the effects that it leaves upon their spirits. For look as it is with the Earth and Plants, with respect to the approach or remove of the Sun in the *Spring* and *Autumn:* So it is here as Christ speaks, *Luk.* 21. 29. *When ye see the Figg-tree and all the Trees shoot forth, we know that Summer is nigh at hand.* An appoaching Sun renews the face of the Earth, and makes Nature smile. The Trees bud and blossom, the Fishes rise, the Birds sing, it's a kind of Resurrection to Nature from the dead. So is it when the Lord comes near the hearts and reins of men in duty: For then they find that 3.

*Dr.* Preston, *when dying, said, I shall change my place, not my Company.*

First, A real taste of the joy of the Lord is here given to men, the fulness whereof is in Heaven; hence call'd, 2 *Cor.* 1, 22. *The earnest of his Spirit:*

And 1 *Pet.* 1. 8. *Glorified Joy*; or a ſhort Salvation. O, what is this? What is this? Certainly it is ſomething that hath no Affinity with fleſh, or groſs corporeal pleaſures; but is of another nature, ſomething which tranſcends all that ever was felt or taſted in this world, ſince we were firſt converſant among ſenſible objects.

Secondly: A mighty ſtrength and power coming into their ſouls, and actuating all its faculties and graces. When God comes near, new powers enter the ſoul; the feeble is as *David*, Pſal. 138. 3. *In the day that I cried, thou anſweredſt me, and ſtrengthenedſt me with ſtrength in my ſoul*: Hope was low, and Faith was weak, little ſtrength in any grace, except deſires; but when the Lord comes, ſtrength comes with him. Then as it is *Neh.* 8. 10. *The joy of the Lord is your ſtrength.* O the vigorous ſallies of the heart to God! *Pſal.* 63. 8. *O the ſtrength of Love,* Cant. 8. 6. Duties are other manner of things than they were wont to be. *Did not our hearts burn within us,* Luk. 24. 32.

Cant. 1. 12. *Whilſt the King ſiteth at his Table, my Spikenard, &c.*

Thirdly: A remarkable transformation and change of ſpirit follows it.

Theſe

These things are found to be marvelously assimilating. The sights of God, the felt presence of God, is as fire which quickly assimilates what is put into it, to its own likeness. So 2 *Cor.* 3. 18, They are said to be *changed from glory to glory.* It always leaves the mind more refined and abstracted from gross material things, and changed into the same Image. They have a similitude of God upon them, who have God near unto their hearts and reins.

Fourthly: A vigorous working of the heart Heaven-ward: A mounting of the soul upwards. Now the soul shews that it hath not forgot its way home again. It is with such a soul as sensibly embraces Christ in the arms of Faith, as it was with *Simeon*, when he took him bodily into his Arm. *Now* (saith he) *let thy Servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy Salvation.* O! it would have the wings of a Dove to flie away from this polluted world, this unquiet world, and be at rest.

1. *Infer.*

1. *Infer.* *Then certainly there is an Heaven and a ſtate of glory for the Saints.* Heaven is no dream or night Viſion. It is ſenſibly taſted and felt by thouſands of Witneſſes in this world; they are ſure it is no miſtake. God is with them of a truth, in the way of their duties. They do not only read of a glorified eye, but they have ſomething of it, or like it in this world. *The pure in heart do here ſee God*, Matth. 5. 8. The Saints have not only a Witneſs without them in the Word, that there is a ſtate of glory prepared for Believers, but they have a witneſs in themſelves. Theſe are not the Teſtimonies of craz'd brains, but of the wiſeſt and moſt ſerious of men; not a few, but a multitude of them; not conjecturally delivered, but upon taſte, feeling, and tryal. O, bleſſed be God for ſuch ſenſible Confirmations, ſuch ſweet prælibations.

2. *Infer.*

2. *Infer.* But, O, what is Heaven! and what that ſtate of glory reſerved for the Saints!

Saints: Doth a glimps of Gods preſence in a duty, go down to the heart and reins? O, how unutterable then muſt that be which is ſeen and felt above, where God comes as near to men as can be? *Rev.* 22. 3, 4. *The Throne of God and the Lamb ſhall be in it, and his Servants ſhall ſerve him; and they ſhall ſee his face.* And 1 *Theſ.* 4. 17. *And ſo ſhall we be ever with the Lord.* O, what is that! *Ever with the Lord.* Chriſtians, what you feel and taſte here by Faith, is part of Heavens glory; but yet Heaven will be an unſpeakable ſurprizal to you, when you come thither for all that: *It doth not yet appear what we ſhall be,* 1 Joh. 3. 1, 2.

## 3. *Infer.*

3. *Infer.* See hence the neceſſity of caſting theſe very bodies into a new mold by their Reſurrection from the dead, according to that, 1 *Cor.* 15. 41. *It is ſown in weakneſs, but raiſed in power.* How elſe could it be a Co-partner with the ſoul in the ineffable joys of that preſence above.

Certainly my Friends, that which is to be a Veſſel to contain ſuch ſtrong

liquor as this, had need be ſtrongly hooped; leſt it flie to pieces, as old Bottles do when filld with new Wine. The ſtate of this Mortality cannot bear the fulneſs of that joy. Hold Lord, ſtay thy hand (ſaid a choice Chriſtian once) thy Creature is but a clay Veſſel, and can hold no more. If a tranſient glimpſe of God here, be felt in the very reins; if it ſo work upon the very body by ſympathy with the ſoul, O, what vigorous ſpiritual bodies doth the ſtate of glory require! And ſuch they ſhall be, *Phil.* 3. 21. *like unto Chriſts glorious Body.*

## 4. *Infer.*

4. *Infer.* Is God ſo near to his People above all others in the world? how good is it to be near them that are ſo near to God. O, it would do a mans heart good to be near that Perſon who hath lately had God near to his ſoul. Well might *David* ſay; *Pſal.* 16. 3. *All my delight is in the Saints, and in the Excellent of the Earth.* And again, *Pſal.* 119. 63. *I am a Companion of all ſuch as fear thee.* O, this is the beauty of Chriſtian fellowſhip; this is the glory of that

that Society; not the communication of their gifts, but the Savour of God on their Spirits. If any thing be alluring in this World, this is, 1 *Joh.* 1. 3. *That ye may have fellowship with us, and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Christ Jesus.* It's said, *Zech.* 8. 23. of the *Jews*, the time shall come when there shall be such a presence of God among that People, that *ten men out of all Languages shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a* Jew; *saying, we will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you.*

Christians, if there were more of God upon you, and in you, others would not be tempted to leave your Society, and fall in with the Men of the World; they would say, we will go with you, for God is with you.

## 5. *Infer.*

If God be so near to the heart and reins of his People in their duties, O, how assiduous should they be in their duties? *It's good for me to draw nigh to God*, Psal. 73. 28. Good indeed; the World cannot reward the expence of time at this rate, with all its glory,

5. *Infer.*

*Jam.* 4. 8. *Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you: Thou meeteſt him that rejoyceth and worketh Righteouſneſs; thoſe that remember thee in thy ways,* Iſa. 64. 5.

*Ob.* It would be an encouragement indeed, if I might thus meet God in the way of duty, but that's but ſeldom I can ſo meet God there, in ſenſible powerful out-lets of his grace and love. I am moſtly dead and cold there. I feel not Communion with God going down to my heart and reins.

*Sol.* Firſt, you draw nigh to God; but is it in truth, or in meer formality? God is only nigh to ſuch as call in truth upon him, *Pſal.* 145. 18.

Secondly: If your hearts be ſincere, yet are they not ſluggiſh? Do you ſtir up your ſelves to take hold of God? many there be that do not, *Iſa.* 64. 7. and *Cant.* 5. 3, 5.

Thirdly: Have you not grieved the Spirit of God, and cauſed him to withdraw from you? O, remember what Pride and Vanity hath been in you after former manifeſtations, *Eph.* 4. 30.

Fourthly: Nevertheleſs wait for God in his ways; his coming upon our ſouls is oftentimes, yea, moſtly a

ſur-

ſurprizal to us, *Cant. 6. 12. Or ever I was aware, my ſoul made me as the Chariots of* Aminadab.

## 6. *Infer.*

6. *Infer.* What ſteddy Chriſtians ſhould all real Chriſtians be? For loe, what a Seal and Witneſs hath Religion in the breaſt of every ſincere Profeſſor of it? True Chriſtians do not only hear by report, or learn by Books the reality of it, but feel by experience, and have a ſenſible proof of it in their very hearts and reins; their reins inſtruct them, as it is *Pſal. 16. 7.* They learn by ſpiritual ſenſe and feeling, than which nothing can give greater confirmation in the ways of God.

There are two ſorts of knowledge among men, one *Traditional*, the other *Experimental:* This laſt, the *Apoſtle* calls a *knowing in our ſelves*, Heb. 10. 34. and oppoſes it to that traditional knowledge which may be ſaid to be without our ſelves, becauſe borrowed from other men.

Now this experience we have of the powers of Religion in our ſouls, is that only which fixes a mans ſpirit in the

ways of Godlineſs. It made the *Hebrews* take joyfully the ſpoiling of their goods; no arguments or temptations can wreſt truth out of the hand of experience, *non eſt diſputandum de guſtu.* For want of this, many Profeſſors turn aſide from truth in the hour of tryal. O, Brethren, labour to feel the influences of Religion upon your very hearts and reins; this will ſettle you better than all Arguments in the world can do: By this the ways of God are more endeared to men, than by any other way in the world. When your hearts have once felt it, you will never forſake it.

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THE

# THE THIRD MEDITATION UPON

Rom. 7. 21. *I find then a Law, that when I would do good, evil is present with me.*

THIS Chapter is the very *Anatomy* of a Christians heart, and gives an account of the most secret frames & inward workings of it, both as to Graces and Corruptions; and this Verse is a Compendium of both; for the words are a mournful complaint, uttered with a deep sense of an inward pressure, by reason of Sin; wherein we are to consider three things.

1. The person complaining,
2. The matter of complaint.
3. The discovery of that matter.

First:

1. First: The perſon complaining I find: I *Paul*, though I come not behind the chiefeſt of all the Apoſtles, though I have been wrapt into the third Heaven, & heard things unutterable; yet I for all that, find in me a Law. Never was any meer man more deeply ſanctified; Never any lived at an higher rate of Communion with God; never any did Chriſt more ſervice in this world; and yet he found a Law of ſin in himſelf.

2. Secondly: The matter of the complaint which conſiſts in a double evil he groaned under, *viz.*

1. The preſence of ſin at all times.
2. The operation of ſin, eſpecially at ſome time.

First: The preſence of ſin at all times. *Evil* (ſaith he) *is preſent with me*, it follows me as my ſhaddow doth. By evil we muſt underſtand no other evil but ſin, the evil of evils; which in reſpect of power and efficacy, he alſo calls *a Law*, becauſe as Laws by reaſon of their annexed rewards and puniſhments, have a mighty power and efficacy upon the minds of men; ſo ſin, in-

in-dwelling ſin, that root of all our trouble and ſorrow, hath a mighty efficacy upon us.

And this is the mournful matter of his complaint: 'Tis not for outward Afflictions, though he had many; nor for what he ſuffered from the hands of men, though he ſuffered many grievous things; but 'tis ſin, dwelling and working in him, that ſwallows up all other troubles, as Rivers are loſt in the Sea; this evil was always with him, the conſtant reſidence of ſin was in his heart and nature.

Secondly: And what further adds to his burden, as it dwelt in him at all times, ſo it exerted its efficacy more eſpecially at ſome times, and thoſe the ſpecial times and principal ſeaſons in his whole life: *When I would do good* (ſaith he) any ſpiritual good; and among the reſt, when I addreſs my ſelf to any ſpiritual duty, or Heavenly imployment; when I deſign to draw near to God, and promiſe my ſelf comfort and redreſs in Communion with him, then is Evil preſent. O, if I were but rid of it in thoſe hours, what a mercy ſhould I eſteem it, though I were troubled with it at other times! Could I but

*Cum ad optima quæque contendo, experio aliam legem tunc maximè ingurgit & percipitur lex carnis.* Tolletus.

but enjoy my freedom from it in the ſeaſons of duty and times of communion with God, what a comfort would that be? But then is the ſpecial ſeaſon of its operation. Never is ſin more active and buſie than at ſuch a time; and this, O, this is my miſery and burden.

Thirdly: The next thing to be heeded here, is the diſcovery of this evil to him, over which he ſo mourns and laments. *I find then a Law*, ſaith he, I find it (*i. e.*) by inward ſenſe feeling and ſad experience. He knew there was ſuch a thing as Original ſin in the Natures of men, when he was an Unregenerated *Phariſee*; but though he had then the notion of it, he had not the ſenſe and feeling of it as now he had; he now feels what before he traditionally underſtood and talkt of. *I find a Law.* q. d. What or how others find, I know not, I examine not; ſome may boaſt of their gifts, and ſome may talk more than becomes them of their graces; they may find excellencies in themſelves, and admire themſelves too much for them: But for my part, *I find a Law, that when I would do good, evil is preſent.* I am ſure I find

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a bad heart in the best season, a proud dead, wandring, hard heart. I find it wofully out of order God knows, and this is my misery.

Hence Note.

Doct.

*That the best Christians do sensibly feel, and sadly bewail the workings of their corruptions; and that in the very seasons and opportunities of their communion with God.* Doct.

Bring thy thoughts Reader close to this point, and sadly ponder these three things in it.

First: In what special acts Christians use to feel the working of their corruption in the season of their Communion.

Secondly: Why is it that Corruption stirs and troubles them more at such times, than at others.

Thirdly: Upon what account this is so great a burden to every gracious heart.

I.

First: As to the first of these, namely, the special actings of Corruption in the seasons of Communion, they are I.

such

ſuch as have a natural aptitude and deſign to deſtroy all Communion betwixt God and the ſoul, *Gal.* 5. 17. *The fleſh luſteth againſt the ſpirit.* It's contrary to the ſpirit, and by reaſon of that contrariety, a poor Chriſtian cannot do the things that he would.

How many times have ſome Chriſtians lamented this upon their knees, with bleeding hearts and weeping eyes? Lord I came hither to enjoy thee; I hop'd for ſome light, ſtrength, and refreſhment in this duty. I promis'd my ſelf a good hour; my heart began to warm and melt in duty; I was nigh to the expectation and deſire of my ſoul; but the unbelief, deadneſs, and vanity of my heart hath ſeperated betwixt me and my God, and with-held good things from me.

Three things are requiſite to Communion with God in duties.

Firſt: Compoſedneſs of thoughts.

Secondly: Activity of Faith.

Thirdly: Excitation of affections, and all theſe are ſenſibly obſtructed by innate Corruption: For by in-dwelling ſin.

1. Firſt: The order of the ſoul is diſturbed by ſending forth multitudes of vain

vain and impertinent thoughts to infeſt and diſtract the ſoul in its approaches to God; the ſenſe of this evil gave occaſion to that prayer, *Pſal.* 86. 11. *Unite my heart to fear thy Name.* How much have we to do with our own hearts upon this account every day? Abundance of rules are given to cure this evil; but the corruption of the heart makes them all neceſſary.

Secondly: The activity of Faith is clogg'd by natural unbelief: O, what difficulties is every work of Faith carried through? *Lord I believe, help thou my unbelief*, Mark. 9. 24. It cramps the hand of Faith in every part of its work; the ſoul ſenſibly feels it ſelf bound and fetter'd by its own unbelief, ſo that it cannot *aſſent* with that fulneſs, clearneſs, and determinatneſs that it would. It cannot *apply* with that ſtrength, certainty, and comfort it deſires; and thus are the wings of Faith pinion'd, that when we ſhould ſoar aloft in the higheſt acts of ſweet communion with God, we can but flutter upon the Earth, and make ſome weak eſſays and offers Heaven-ward, which often times are fruſtrated and put by, through the unbelief that is in us. 2.

Third-

Thirdly: The excitation of the affection is rendred difficult by reason of that natural deadness and hardness that is in the heart. Alas! It's naturally an heart of stone, and as easie it is to dissolve or melt the Rocks into a sweet syrup, as the heart into spiritual and Heavenly affections towards God. There is scarce any one thing in this world that Christians more passionately bewail, and are more sensibly afflicted for, than the deadness and hardness of their own hearts. Nothing is found sufficient sometimes to effect, and raise them; and yet if they be not excited out of their torpor and stupidity, they cannot have Communion with God in duties,

2.

2. Secondly: And if we enquire into the reasons why poor Christians find themselves more infested by natural Corruption in the seasons of duty, than at other times, the reasons are obvious to him that considers,

That { 1. Duty irritates it. 2. Satan excites it. 3. God permits it to be so.

First:

First: Corruption is irritated by duty, its provoked by that which bridles and purges it: Nothing is found more destructive to Sin, than Communion with God is, and therefore nothing makes a fiercer opposition to all fellowship and communion betwixt the soul and its God, than sin doth. As Waters swell and rage when they are obstructed by a dam, so do our Corruptions, when obstructed and check'd by duty. Sin would fain make men leave praying, and Prayer would fain make men leave sinning. 1.

Secondly: As *Duty* irritates it, so *Satan* excites it, especially in such seasons. When *Joshua*, the High Priest, stood before the Lord, Satan was seen standing at his right hand to resist him, *Zech.* 3. 1. How hard is it for a Christian then to be dexterous, apt, and ready for spiritual works, whilst *Satan* stands at his right hand, the working hand, to make resistance. 2.

The Devil is aware that one hour of close spiritual and hearty converse with God in Prayer, is able to pull down what he hath been contriving and building many a year. Now this envious Spirit having an easie access to

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to the phanſie, that buſie and unruly power of the ſoul, will not be wanting to create ſuch figments and notions in it, as like a rapid ſtream ſhall carry away the ſoul and all its thoughts from God in duty. Oh, what adoe have moſt Chriſtians to prevent the ſallies and excurſions of their hearts from God at ſuch times!

3. Thirdly: As Satan exerciſes it, ſo the Wiſe and Holy God, for good ends to his People, permits it to be ſo.

This Thorn in the Fleſh keeps them humble; theſe lamented deſtructions and corruptions in their duties deſtroys their dependance upon them, and glorying in them. For if we be ſo prone to pride and confidence in our duties, amidſt ſuch ſenſible workings and minglings of Corruption with them, what ſhould we be if they were more pure and excellent? Theſe things alſo make the Saints weary of this World, and to groan within themſelves after the more perfect ſtate, wherein God ſhall be enjoyed and ſeen in more perfection and ſatisfaction. But

3.

3. Thirdly: This in the mean time can-

cannot but be a very grievous affliction and preſſure to the gracious ſoul, to be thus clog'd and infeſted by its own Corruptions in the very ſeaſon of its communion with God. For,

Firſt: By this the ſoul is rendred very unſuitable to that holy preſence it approaches, *Hab.* 1. 13. *Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canſt not look upon Iniquity.* Muſt the great and bleſſed God wait upon a poor Worm till it be at leiſure to attend him? Muſt he be forſaken for every trifle that comes in the way of its phanſie? Oh, how provoking an evil is this! *Surely God heareth not Vanity, neither will the Almighty regard it,* Job 35. 13. This unſuitableneſs of our ſpirits to the Lord, cannot do leſs than cover our faces with ſhame, as it did, *Ezra.* 9. 6. *O my God I am aſhamed, and even bluſh to look up unto thee.*

Secondly: By this thoſe benefits and comforts are intercepted, which are better than life: There is a ſenſible preſence of God, there are manifeſtations of pardon, peace, and love; there are reviving influences and freſh anointings of the ſpirit; there are a thouſand mercies of this kind, that in their

their ſeaſons are communicated to men in the way of duty; and would it not grieve a man to the very heart and ſoul, to be defeated of thoſe inestimable treaſures, by the breaking forth of the Unbelief, Pride, or Vanity of his own heart, when ſuch mercies are almoſt in his hand? *Your Iniquites* (ſaith the Prophet) *have ſeparated betwixt you and your God, and your ſins have hid his face from you that he will not hear*, Iſa. 59. 2. O cruel covering! O diſmal Cloud! that hides the face of God from his People, that they cannot behold it. *Wherefoream I come from* Geſhur (ſaith *Abſalom*) *if I may not ſee the Kings face?*

What do I here upon my knees, ſaith a Chriſtian, if I may not ſee God. Duties are nothing to me without God: The World and all its comforts are dry and taſteleſs things to me without God: His manifeſted favour, and ſealed love are the very life of my life, and from this the corruptiun of my own heart have cut me off.

Thirdly: By theſe things the beauty and excellency of duties are defaced. Theſe dead flies ſpoil that excellent Oyntment; for wherein conſiſts the beauty

beauty and true excellencies of duties, but in that ſpirituality & Heavenly temper of ſoul, with which they are performed? This makes them ſuitable to their object, *Joh.* 4. 24. take away ſpirituality from duties, and then you may number them among your ſins, and the matters of your ſhame and ſorrow. Take away the heart from duty, and what remains but a dead carcaſs, without life or beauty?

Fourthly; By theſe things gracious ſouls are greatly puzled and perplexed about their eſtate and condition. This is the fountain of their fears and doubtings. O, when a man feels ſuch deadneſs in his heart towards God, ſuch ſtiffneſs in his will to the will of God, ſuch a liſtleſs careleſs temper to all that is ſpiritual? How (thinks he) can this conſiſt with a renewed ſtate and temper? Sure no Chriſtian is troubled with ſuch an heart as mine is; eſpecially when it ſhall be found in its ordinary courſe ſo free, nimble, and indefatigable in its perſuits and entertainments of things ſenſual and earthly. There it is as the Chariots of *Aminadab*, but here, like *Pharoahs* Chariots; there it as much needs the *Curb*, as it doth the

*Spur*

*Spur* here. Lord, ſaith the poor ſoul, I know not what to do: If I do not look into my heart I cannot be ſincere; and if I do, I can have no comfort. This is a ſad perplexity indeed.

Fifthly and laſtly: By theſe things the Spirit of God is grieved, and that which grieves him cannot but be a grief and burden to us: His motions are quench'd by theſe Corruptions, his ſanctifying deſigns (as much as lies in us) obſtructed by them, ſurely then there is cauſe enough why a Chriſtian ſhould follow every vain thought with a deep ſigh, and every ſtirring of unbelief with a ſad tear.

The uſefulneſs of this point is great, and exceeding ſeaſonable, when we are to draw nigh to God, and addreſs our ſelves to ſpiritual duties; It may to great purpoſe be improved by ways.

Of { 1. Information. 2. Direction. 3. Conſolation.

We may greatly improve it for our Information in the following particulars.

Hence

1.

Hence we may take our meaſures of the wonderful and aſtoniſhing grace and condeſcenſion of God to his People, who notwithſtanding all that evil which is preſent with them in the good they do, will not reject their perſons or duties for all that. 1.

How doth free grace make its own way through ſwarms of Vanity! How doth it break through all the deadneſs, infidelity and hardneſs of our hearts to do us good! Though evil be preſent with us, our gracious God will not be abſent from us notwithſtanding that.

How greatly was the Spouſe amaz'd at the unexpected condeſcenſion and grace of Chriſt in this matter? *Cant.* 2. 8. *It is the voice of my Beloved, behold he cometh leaping over the Mountains, skipping over the Hills. It is the Voice of my Beloved.*] That abrupt cutted expreſſion ſhews a perfect ſurprize. She ſaw mountains of guilt and unworthineſs betwixt Chriſt and her Soul, and yet behold he comes skipping over all thoſe mountains and hills: O free grace! rich and admirable grace, which with ſo many *notwithſtandings*, and *ne-*

*vertheleſſes*, will ſave and comfort the poor unworthy ſoul!

2.

2. How little reaſon have any of us to be proud of our beſt performances! *There is not a juſt man upon Earth, that doth good and ſinneth not*, ſaith *Solomon*, Eccleſ. 7. 20. If there be ſomething ſupernaturally good in our duties, yet there is abundance of natural evil commixed with that good; the evil is wholly ours, the good wholly Gods: we have no reaſon then to glory in our beſt performances.

It hath been a queſtion with ſome, whether ſome ſhort tranſient act of a regenerate ſoul may not be free from ſin; but it was never queſtion'd whether any continued act, much leſs a courſe of actions could be without ſin. Evil will be preſent with us in all we do, 'twill be with us in our Cloſets, preſent even in the awful preſence of the holy God, in the moſt high and ſolemn duties of Religion, in the moſt pure and ſpiritual actions that paſs from us; ceaſe then as from dependance, ſo from Pride and Conceitedneſs in all you do. Whilſt our natures are ſanctified but in

part,

part, and our principles mixt, our duties and performances can never be pure. *Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one*, Job 14. 4.

3.

How are we all obliged to bleſs God for *Jeſus* the *Mediator*, to make us and our ſinful duties acceptable to God? Sad were our caſe if this High Prieſt did not *bear the Iniquity of our holy things*, as it is, *Exod.* 28. 38. 'Tis his Oblation and Interceſſion that obtains and continues our pardon for our Prayer-ſins, our Hearing-ſins, our Sacrament-ſins: Theſe alone would eternally damn us, if we had no other, did not free grace *make us accepted in the Beloved*, Eph. 1. 6. When evil is preſent with us, then is Chriſt, our *Advocate*, preſent with the Father for us; and thence it is that we are not deſtroyed upon our knees, and that the jealouſie of God breaks not forth as fire to devour us in our very duties. 3.

4.

If evil be preſent with us, yea, inherent in us, in our beſt duties, what need had Chriſtians then to watch a- 4.

gainſt the external occaſions of ſin, and to keep a cloſe guard upon their ſenſes, eſpecially when they have to do with God!

There's danger enough from within, you need not open another door from without. This natural corruption is too active in it ſelf, if there be no irritation by any external occaſion; how much more when the eye and ear are open and unguarded, and occaſions are offer'd it from without. Watching is half the work of a Chriſtian, whilſt he is praying, *Eph.* 6. 18. The *Arabian Proverb* is as *inſtructive* as it is *myſtical*; ſhut the Windows that the Houſe may be light.

5.

5. If evil be preſent when we would do good, if it infeſt us in our beſt duties; then certainly there is no reſt to be expected for any of Gods People in this world. Where ſhall we go to be free from ſin; if any where, let us go to our Cloſets, to our knees, to the Ordinances of God; yea, but even there evil is and will be preſent with us, if we cannot be free from evil there, it's in vain to expect it elſewhere in this world.

world. Only in Heaven Believers reſt from ſin, when once they are abſent from the body, and preſent with the Lord, ſin ſhall no more be preſent with them; which ſhould make all that hate ſin, long for Heaven, and be willing to be diſſolved, and be with Chriſt.

## 2. *For Direction.*

Let all that experimentally ſenſe and feel what the Apoſtle here mourns over, carefully attend ſuch *directions* as may prevent the ſpoil of their duties by the working of their corruptions in them.

Though no rules are found ſufficient to prevent wholly the influence of our Corruptions upon our duties, yet own it as a ſpecial mercy, if it may in any meaſure be prevented, or reſtrained; in order whereunto, I ſhall hint briefly theſe following rules, which the experience of many Chriſtians hath recommended as exceeding uſeful in this caſe.

1. *Rule.* Firſt: *Be more diligent in preparation for your duties, if you would meet with leſs interruption in your duties.* The very light of nature teacheth ſolemn preparation to all important and weighty

buſineſs, and is there more ſolemn and concerning buſineſs in all the world, than that which thou tranſacteſt with God in duties? Angels approach not this God with whom thou haſt to do, without profound reſpects to his immenſe greatneſs & awful holineſs, *Eſa.* 6. 3. When you ſtretch forth your hands, it is required that you firſt prepare your hearts, *Job* 11. 13.

2. *Rule.* Secondly: *Realize the preſence of God in all your duties, and awe your hearts all that you are able by that conſideration.* O, think what a piercing holy eye beholds thy heart, and tries thy reins. Wouldſt thou not be really aſhamed, if thy thoughts were but vocal to men, and the workings and wandrings of thy heart viſible to thoſe that joyn with thee in the ſame duty? O, if the preſence of God were more realized, certainly your hearts would be better ſecured againſt the incurſions of your Corruptions!

3. *Rule.* Thirdly: *Labour for a deeper meaſure and degree of Sanctification*; many other rules are but *Spiritual Anodynes*, to give preſent eaſe; but this is the way to a real *Cure*: a thouſand things may be found helpful to put by a vain thought for

for the preſent, but then it returns again, and it may be with more ſtrength: This is the proper method to dry the *ſpring*, when others are but attempts to divert the *ſtream*. If habits of grace were more deeply radicated, acts of grace would be more eaſie to us, and flow more freely from us.

Laſtly: *Conſider what an aggravation it is to your evil, to vent it ſelf in the ſpecial preſence of God in duties.* See how *Paul* mourns over it in the Text. It is not only a ſin, but an affronting of God to his Face; this grieving of his Spirit, the ſpoil of thy duty; it is (as one aptly calls it) *obex infernalis*, an helliſh Bar or *Remora* to all ſweet and free intercourſe of the ſoul with God. 5. *Rule.*

## 3. *Conſolation.*

But whilſt I am repreſenting the evil of it to ſome, it may be there are others over-whelmed with the ſorrowful ſenſe of it, even to diſcouragement and deſpondency: Poor Chriſtian, is this thy caſe? Are all the Afflictions in the world nothing to thee in compariſon with this evil which is preſent with thee, when thou wouldſt do good. 3.

Well, though thou canſt not do the good thou wouldſt, nor free thy ſelf yet from the evil thou wouldſt rather than live be freed from: There are four things that may be much relief to thy penſive ſoul.

1. Firſt: *Though the preſence of evil even in thy beſt duties be ſad, yet thy grief and affliction for it is ſweet.* That is a ſad *ſin*, but this is a ſweet *ſign:* It is not heart-evils, heart-wandrings in duties, hardneſs, and unbelief that Hypocrites mourn for, but more groſs and external evils. Let this trouble for ſin comfort thee, when the preſence of ſin grieves thee.

2. Secondly: *God accepts through Jeſus Chriſt, what you do ſincerely, though you can do nothing purely and perfectly,* Cant. 5. 1. Your ſincerity is your Evangelical perfection; the evil that is preſent is not imputed; the good that is preſent, is (notwithſtanding that commixed evil) accepted, which is ſtrong conſolation.

3. Thirdly: *You find your caſe was the caſe of bleſſed* Paul, *a man of eminent Sanctity.* And if you conſult all the Saints, one by one, you will find them all ſick of this diſeaſe; ſo that your caſe is not ſingular. Fourthly;

Fourthly: *Your Juſtification is perfect, and without ſpot, though your Sanctification be not ſo*; and the time is coming when your Sanctification ſhall be as your Juſtification is; and after that no more complaints.

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# THE FOURTH MEDITATION UPON

Eph. 1. 13. *In whom alſo, after that ye believed, ye were Sealed with the holy Spirit of Promiſe.*

FROM his doxology and ſolemn Thankſgiving, *ver.* 3. the Apoſtle enumerates the principal Chriſtian priviledges that gave the occaſion of that thankſgiving, among which, this in the Text is not the leaſt, though laſt named.

In this one verſe we have the two noble acts of Faith diſplaid; its *direct* act call'd *Truſting*, and its *reflex* act, which in order of nature and time fol-

follows it, and is implied in the word *Sealing*.

In the latter clauſe (to which I ſhall confine my Meditations) four things muſt be remarked, *viz.*

The { Subject / Nature / Author / Quality } of Aſſurance.

The Subject of Aſſurance, which is and can be no other than a ſoul that hath cloſed with Chriſt by Faith, reflex acts neceſſarily preſuppoſe direct ones. Never was any Unbeliever Sealed, except to Damnation: Aſſurance is peculiarly the Prerogative of Believers. 1.

The Nature of Aſſurance, he calls it *Sealing*; an apt metaphor to expreſs the nature of it. For Aſſurance like a Seal, both confirms, declares, and diſtinguiſhes; it confirms the grant of God, declares the purpoſe of God, and diſtinguiſhes the perſon ſo priviledg'd from other men. 2.

The Author of Aſſurance, which is the *Spirit*, he is the Keeper of the great Seal of Heaven, and it's his Office to 3.

con-

confirm and ſeal the Believers right and intereſt in Chriſt and Heaven, *Rom.* 8. 16.

4. Laſtly: The quality of this Spirit of Aſſurance, or the Sealing Spirit, he Seals in the quality of an holy Spirit, and of the Spirit of promiſe, *as an holy Spirit*, relating to his previous ſanctifying work upon the ſealed ſoul. *As the Spirit of promiſe*, reſpecting the *medium* or inſtrument, made uſe of by him in this his Sealing work; for he Seals by opening and applying the promiſes to Believers from the Spirits order.

The Note will be this.

Doct.

Doct. *That the priviledge of Sealing follows the duty of Believing.*

There is no ſeaſon more proper to treat of the Sealing of the Spirit, than at a Sealing Ordinance; nor can I handle the Spirits ſealing work in a more profitable method, than in ſatisfying theſe five Queries particularly; and then applying the whole.

1. What

1. What is the Spirits Sealing, and how performed?
2. Why none are Sealed till they Believe?
3. Whether all Believers are Sealed?
4. What is the priviledge of being Sealed?
5. What are the effects of the Spirits Sealing?

## 1. Query.

First: *What is the Spirits Sealing work, and how is it performed?* 1 Query.

*Answer.*

The Sealing of the Spirit, is his giving a sure and certain testimony to the reality of that work of grace he hath wrought in our souls, and to our interest in Christ and the Promises; thereby satisfying our fears and doubts about our estate and condition.

Every matter of weight and concernment is to be proved by two sufficient Witnesses, *Deut.* 19. 15. our sincerity and interest in Christ are matters of the deepest concernment to us in all the world, and therefore need a farther witness to confirm and clear them than that

that of our own ſpirits; the ſpirit it ſelf therefore bears witneſs with our ſpirits, *Rom.* 8. 16. Three things concur to the ſpirits Sealing work.

He Sanctifies the ſoul.

He irradiates and clears that work of Sanctification.

He enables it thereby to apply Promiſes.

The firſt, is his *material* or objective Seal, the latter his formal Sealing.

None but the Spirit of God can clear and confirm our title to Chriſt, for he only ſearcheth the deep things of God, 1 *Cor.* 2. 10. and it's his office, *Rom.* 8. 16. συμμαρτυρῶν, to witneſs with our ſpirits.

This Seal or Witneſs of the Spirit muſt needs be true and certain, becauſe Omniſcience and Truth are his eſſential properties: He is Omniſcient, 1 *Cor.* 2. 10. and therefore cannot be deceived himſelf: He is the Spirit of Truth, *Joh.* 14. 17. and therefore cannot deceive us; ſo that his teſtimony is more infallible and ſatisfactory than a Voice from Heaven, 2 *Pet.* 1. 19.

If an Angel ſhould appear and tell us Chriſt had ſaid to him, Go and tell ſuch a man, that I love him, that I ſhed my

my blood for him, and will ſave him; it could never give that repoſe and ſatisfaction to the mind as the internal Witneſs or Seal of the ſpirit doth; for that may be a deluſion, but this cannot. The witneſs of our own heart may amount to a ſtrong probability; but the witneſs of the ſpirit is demonſtration, 1 *Joh.* 4. 24.

So that as it is the deſign and work of *Satan* to caſt in doubts and fears into gracious hearts, to perplex and intangle them, ſo oppoſitely it is the work of the *Spirit* to clear and ſettle the ſanctified ſoul, and fill it with peace and joy in believing, *Joh.* 16. 7. *Rom.* 14. 17.

In Sealing he both atteſts the *fidem quæ creditur*, the doctrine or object of Faith; and the *fidem quâ creditur*, the infuſed habit, or grace of Faith: Of the former he ſaith, this is my *Word*, of the latter, this is my *Work*; and his Seal or Teſtimony is evermore agreeable to the written word, *Iſa.* 8. 20. So that what he ſpeaks in our hearts, and what he ſaith in the Scripture, are ever-more concordant and harmonious teſtimonies.

To

To conclude, in Sealing the Believer, he doth not make uſe of an audible Voice, nor the Miniſtry of Angels, nor immediate and extraordinary revelations; but he makes uſe of his own *graces* implanted in our hearts, and his own *promiſes* written in the Scriptures; and in this method he uſually brings the doubting trembling heart of the Believer to reſt and comfort.

2. Query.

2. Query. *Why are none Sealed till after Believing?*

*Anſw.*

It cannot be denied but that many perſons in the ſtate of nature and unbelief, may have ungrounded confidences, and falſe comforts built thereupon. This is evident from *Matth.* 7. 22. *Many will ſay unto me in that day, Lord, Lord, have not we Propheſied in thy Name.* And *Joh.* 8. 54, 55. *of whom ye ſay that he is your God, and yet ye have not known him.* And beyond all is that ſtartling Scripture, *Heb.* 6. 4, 5.—— *Who were once enlightned, and have taſted of the Heavenly gift, and were made partakers*

*takers of the Holy Ghoſt, and have taſted the good Word of God, and the powers of the World to come, if they fall away,* &c.

But for any except real Believers to have thoſe Witneſſes and Sealings of the Spirit deſcribed above, is utterly impoſſible, and will evidently appear to be ſo, whether we conſider

The { Author, Nature, Object, Mediums, End and deſign. } of this work.

First: Conſider the *Author* of this work, *the Spirit of God*, who is an *Holy* Spirit, as the Text calls him, and the Spirit of *Truth*, as Chriſt calls him, *Joh.* 14. 17. and it cannot be that ever he ſhould give teſtimony to a lye, or give a falſe witneſs, quite croſs to the very tenour of the written word, as he muſt do, ſhould he Seal an Unbeliever. What though they be Elect, yet whilſt Unregenerate, they have no actual intereſt in Chriſt and the Promiſes, and therefore can have none Sealed by the Spirit. *Prius eſt prædicare de eſſe quam de cognoſci*; we muſt be Saints 1.

Saints before we can be known to be ſo.

2. Secondly: Conſider but the nature of this work, and it cannot be, that ever an Unbeliever ſhould be Sealed by the Spirit: For aſſurance is produced in our ſouls by the reflexive acts of our Faith. The Spirit helps us to reflect upon what hath been done by him formerly upon our hearts. *Hereby we know that we know him*, 1 Joh. 2. 3. To know that we know, is a reflex act; now it's impoſſible there ſhould be a reflex before there hath been a direct act. No man can have the evidence of his Faith, before the habit be infuſed, and the vital act firſt performed.

3. Thirdly: Conſider the *object matter*, to which he Seals, and it will be found to be his own Sanctifying operations upon our hearts, and conſequently to our priviledges in Chriſt, *Rom.* 8. 16. 1 *Joh.* 3. 24. The thing or matter atteſted is, that Chriſt abideth in us, and that we are the Children of God. But no ſuch thing can be Sealed till we believe, for neither our Adoption nor Sanctification can be before Faith.

4. Fourthly: Conſider the *mediums* or inſtruments uſed by the Spirit in his Sealing

Sealing work, the promiſes are his ſealing inſtruments, and on that account he is call'd *the Spirit of Promiſe in the Text:* Not only becauſe he is the Spirit promiſed, but as the Promiſes contain the ſpirit, ſo the Spirit uſes the Promiſes *(i. e.)* clears them to our underſtandings, and helps us to apply them to our ſouls; but this he never doth, nor can do, till the ſoul by Faith have union with Chriſt; for till then it hath no right in the Promiſes.

5. Fifthly and laſtly: Conſider the end and deſign of this work of the Spirit, which is to ſecure to the ſoul its peace, pardon, and ſalvation in Chriſt, he ſeals Believers to the day of Redemption, *Eph.* 4. 30. *(i. e.)* to their compleat Salvation: So then it muſt be equally impoſſible for an Unbeliever to be ſealed as to be ſaved.

## 3. Query.

3. Query. *The next enquiry is, whether all Believers are Sealed by the Spirit?*

*Anſw.*

The reſolution of this Query will depend

depend upon ſeveral diſtinctions that muſt be made upon this matter.

1. *Diſtinction.*

1. We muſt diſtinguiſh the different kinds of the Spirits ſealing; all his Sealing work is not of one kind, nor to one and the ſame uſe and end.

There is an *Objective* Seal which diſtinguiſhes the perſon, and a *Formal* Seal which clears and ratifies his intereſt in Chriſt and Salvation. The firſt he doth in *Sanctifying* us; the ſecond in *Aſſuring* us.

When he Seals us *Objectively*, that is, when he Sanctifies us really by the infuſion of grace, he Seals us by way of diſtinction from other men, which is one end of Sealing; for though in reſpect of Gods decree and purpoſe there was a difference betwixt us and others before time, 2 *Tim.* 2. 19. And although in regard of Chriſts intention in his death, there was a difference betwixt us and others, *Joh.* 17. 9. yet all this while there is no perſonal, actual difference betwixt us and others, till Sanctification do make one, *Eph.* 2. 3. and 1 *Cor.* 6. 11. But the Sanctification of the Spirit makes a real difference

rence in the ſtate and temper of the perſon, 2 *Cor.*5.17. and manifeſts that difference which Election put betwixt us and others before-time, 1 *Theſ.* 1. 4, 5. And yet all this while a man may not be formally Sealed (*i. e.*) his Sanctification may be very doubtful to himſelf, and he may labour under great fears about it.

2. *Diſtinction.*

The ſeaſons of the Spirits ſealing, 2.
muſt be diſtinguiſhed; and theſe are to ſome,

Firſt: Immediately upon the ſouls firſt cloſing with Chriſt at Converſion, eſpecially when Converſion is wrought at riper age, and is uſher'd in by a greater degree of the ſpirit of bondage, and deep inward terrors. Thus the *Prodigal* (the emblem of a Convert ſo brought home to God) was entertained with the fatted Calf and Muſick, but all find not this preſently, as ſome do.

Secondly: Times of eminent Communion with God are Sealing times: There are extraordinary out-lets of Peace, Joy, and Comfort, at ſome ſeaſons in duty, which makes the ſtate of

of the ſoul very clear; and baniſhes all ſcruples and fears from the heart.

Thirdly: Others are Sealed upon ſome eminent hazard they have been expoſed to for Chriſt, or ſome extraordinary ſufferings they have undergone for Chriſt; wherein they have carried it with eminent meekneſs, patience, and ſelf-denial, 2 *Cor.* 1. 4, 5. Thus the Martyrs were many times Sealed in the depth of their ſufferings.

Fourthly: It's uſually found that a Sealing time follows a dark day of deſertion, and ſore combats with temptation. *Poſt Nubila Phœbus.* So that Text, *Rev.* 2. 17. is expounded by ſome, *To him that overcometh will I give the white ſtone, and the new name.*

Fifthly: Dying-times prove Sealing-times to many ſouls, if their whole life have been like that day deſcribed by the Prophet, *Zech.* 14. 17. neither dark nor light, a life betwixt hopes and fears, yet at Evening-time it hath been light.

3. *Diſtinction.*

3. Laſtly: We muſt diſtinguiſh the ſeveral ways and manners of Sealing. Some are *extraordinary* and immediate, vouch-

vouchſafed only to ſome perſons, at ſome ſpecial times and ſeaſons. Thus *Zacheus* was in an extraordinary and immediate way aſcertained of his Salvation, *Luk.* 19. 9. *This day is Salvation come to this Houſe.* And ſo the Palſieman, *Mark.* 2. 5. *Son* (ſaith Chriſt) *thy ſins be forgiven thee.* But theſe immediate ways are ceaſed; no man may now expect by any new Revelation or Sign from Heaven, by any Voice, or extraordinary Inſpiration to have his Salvation ſealed, but muſt expect that mercy in Gods ordinary way and method, ſearching the Scriptures, examining our own hearts, and waiting on the Lord in Prayer.

The Learned *Gerſon* gives an inſtance of one that had been long upon the borders of deſpair, and at laſt ſweetly aſſured and ſetled; and being asked how he attained that Aſſurance, he anſwered, *Non ex nova aliqua revelatione*, &c. Not by any new revelation, but by ſubjecting my underſtanding to, and comparing my heart with the written word.

And Mr. *Roberts* in his Treatiſe of the Covenants, ſpeaks of another that ſo vehemently panted after the Sealings and

and Aſſurance of the love of God to his ſoul, that for a long time he earneſtly deſired ſome Voice from Heaven; and ſometimes walking in the ſolitary Fields, earneſtly deſired ſome miraculous voice from the Trees or Stones there: This was denied him, but in time a better was afforded in a ſcriptural way.

Now to reſolve the Query out of theſe diſtinctions.

Firſt: Though all Believers have not the *formal* Sealings of the Spirit, yet they have the *objective*, or material Seal; that is, the Spirit is in them as a ſanctifying ſpirit, putting a real difference betwixt them and others, when he is not with them by way of evidence and aſſurance of ſanctification.

Secondly: Though all Believers are not Sealed at one and the ſame time, yet there are few, if any Believers, but do meet with one ſeaſon or other in this life, wherein the Lord doth Seal them; if not at their firſt cloſe with Chriſt, as many have been Sealed, yet in ſome choice and eminent ſeaſon of communion with God, ſuch golden ſpots of time, ſuch precious ſeaſons moſt Chriſtians

ſtians can ſpeak of. Though as *Bernard* ſpeaks, it be *rara hora, brevis mora.* Seldom but ſweet: Or if not in the courſe of their *active obedience*, 'tis a thouſand to one but they ſhall meet it in the way of their *paſſive obedience*, if God exerciſe them eminently under the croſs, or after a dark cloud of deſertion, or in a dying hour.

Thirdly and laſtly: Though God now Seals not men in an extraordinary and immediate way by Revelation, immediate Inſpiration, or Voices from Heaven, yet moſt Chriſtians are ſealed in the ordinary way of the Spirit, under one Ordinance or other, in one duty or other.

4. Query.

*What is the priviledge of being Sealed by the Spirit?*

*Anſw.*

Much every way, words cannot expreſs the riches of this mercy; for let us but conſider the four following particulars, and you will admire the mercy.

1. First: Conſider whoſe act and proper work Sealing is. God doth not ſend *Angels* upon this Errand; though if he did, that would be a great honour to poor duſt and aſhes, but he ſends his Spirit to do it. Oh, the Condeſcenſion of the great God to men! this is a greater honour than if millions of Angels were imploy'd about it.

And then as to certainty and ſatisfaction, it is beyond all other ways and methods in the world; for in miraculous Voices and Inſpirations it's poſſible there may *ſubeſſe falſum*, be found ſome Cheat or Impoſture of the Devil; but the ſpirits witneſs in the heart, ſuitable to his revelation in the Scripture, cannot deceive us.

2. Secondly: The concluſion or truth ſealed, is raviſhing and tranſporting. All Chriſtians vehemently pant for it, few have the enjoyment of it for any long continuance. But whilſt they do enjoy it, they enjoy Heaven upon Earth, a joy beyond all the joys of this world. To have this concluſion ſurely Sealed, *Chriſt is mine*, my ſin is pardoned, I ſhall be ſaved from wrath, through him: O, what is this! what is this! Thirdly:

Thirdly: Conſider the ſubject, or perſon Sealed, a poor ſinful wretch that haſt ten thouſand times over grieved the good Spirit of God, by whom notwithſtanding thou art Sealed to the day of Redemption: Thou haſt by every ſin deſerved to be ſealed up to Damnation: Thou haſt reaſon to account and eſteem thy ſelf much inferior in graces and duties to many thouſands of the Saints that are panting after this priviledge, and cannot obtain it: O, the riches of the goodneſs of God! 3.

Fourthly and laſtly, Conſider the deſigns and aims of the Spirit in his Sealing thy ſoul, which are 4.

1. To ſecure Heaven to thee for ever.

2. As intermediate thereunto, to bring very much of Heaven into thy ſoul, in the way to it; indeed to give thee two Heavens, whilſt many others muſt ſuffer two Hells.

## 5. Query.

*Laſtly: We will enquire what are the effects of the Spirits ſealing upon our ſouls, by which we may diſtinguiſh and clearly diſcern it from all deluſions* 5. Query.

*of Satan, and all Impostures whatsoever?*

*Answ.*

The genuine and proper effects and fruits of Sealing, are

1. Inflamed Love.
2. Renewed Care.
3. Deep Abasements.
4. Increase of Strength.
5. A desire to be with the Lord.
6. Improved Mortification to the world.

Wheresoever these are found consequent to our Communion with God, and his manifestations of himself to us therein, they put it beyond all doubt, that it was the Seal of his own blessed Spirit, and no delusion.

1. First: The Sealings of the Spirit cannot but inflame the love of the soul in a very intense degree towards God: One flame doth not more naturally beget another, than the love of God doth kindle the love of a gracious soul to him. *We have known and believed the love that God hath to us,* 1 Joh. 4. 16. 19. When

When Chriſt had forgiven much to that poor Woman that had ſin'd much, and manifeſted pardoning mercy to her ſoul; O, how much was her love to Chriſt inflamed thereby? *Luk.* 7. 47.

Secondly: Renewed care and diligence follows the Sealings of the Spirit. Now is the ſoul at the foot of Chriſt, as *Mary* was at the *Sepulcher*, with fear and great joy. He that Travels the Road with a rich treaſure about him, is afraid of a Thief in every buſh. This is exemplified in the Spouſe, who had endured many a ſad day and night in Chriſts abſence, and ſought him ſorrowing; but when ſhe had regained his felt and ſenſible preſence, it's ſaid, *Cant.* 3. 4. *I found him whom my ſoul loveth; I held him, and would not let him go.* 2.

She doth not (as one ſpeaks) lay by diligence, as if all were done; but is of new taken up with as great care to retain and improve this mercy, as before ſhe was ſolicitous to obtain it. Whether a Believer want or have, whether he be ſeeking or enjoying, there is ſtill matter of exerciſe for him in his condition. *Durham in Loc.*

3. Thirdly: Deep abasement and great humblings use to follow the eminent appearances of God to the souls of men. *Lord* (said that Disciple) *how is it that thou wilt manifest thy self to us and not unto the world*, Joh. 14. 22. When God Sealed the Covenant to *Abraham*, to be a God to him, at this *Abraham* fell upon his face, *Gen.* 17. 1, 2, 3. Never doth a soul lie lower in the dust, and abhor it self, than when the Lord makes the most signal manifestations of his grace and love to it.

4. Fourthly: Increased strength follows the sealings of the Spirit. New powers enter into the soul, and a sensible improvement of its abilities for duty, *or ever I was aware* (saith the Spouse) *my soul made me as the Chariots of* Aminadab, *Cant.* 6. 12.

Now the wheels of the soul being oyled with the joy and comfort of the Spirit run nimbly in the ways of obedience. The joy of the Lord is your strength.

5. Fifthly: Sealings of the Spirit, inflames the desires of the soul after Heaven, and makes it long to go home. Nothing makes death so undesirable to the Saints, as the doubts and fears that hang

hang upon their Spirits about their condition. Were their evidences for Heaven clear, and their doubts resolved, they would as the Apostle speaks, *desire to be dissolved, and to be with Christ*, Phil. 1. 23. If once the great question of our interest in Christ be throughly decided, and all be clear betwixt us and our God, we shall find *Life* the matter of *Patience*, and *Death* the object of *desire*.

Sixthly and lastly: Improved Mortification to the world, flows naturally from the Sealings and Assurances of the love of God to our souls. It is with our souls after such a view of Heaven, and a sealed interest therein, as it is with him that hath been gazing upon that glorious Creature the Sun, when he comes to cast his eye again upon the Earth, all things seem dark and cloudy to him. He sees no beauty in any of those things, because of that excellent luster which he lately beheld. *We know* (saith the Apostle) *that if our earthly house of this Tabernacle were dissolv'd, we have a building of God, an House not made with hands, eternal in the Heavens*, there's Assurance or Sealing: *For in this we groan earnestly, de-* 6.

*ſtridg to be cloathed upon with our Houſe which is from Heaven.* There's the natural effect of it, 2 *Cor.* 5. 1, 2.

## Uſes.

The point ſpeaks to three ſorts of perſons, *viz.*

1. To thoſe that have not yet been Sealed.
2. To thoſe that once had, but now want this comfort.
3. To thoſe that enjoy the comforts of it.

1. First: To thoſe that yet want this mercy, who have not been formally Sealed by any aſſurance of their title to Chriſt, but all their days have been clog'd with fears and doubts of their condition. To ſuch my Counſel is.

First: That you be not quiet under theſe uncertainties, but pant after the aſſurance of peace and pardon. Say unto Chriſt as the Spouſe did, *Cant.* 8. 6. *Set me as a Seal upon thy heart, as a Seal upon thine arm:* Pant after it as *David* did, *Pſal.* 35. 3. *Say unto my ſoul, I am thy Salvation.*

How

How can you look upon such precious promises, and not dare to tast them? How can you hear others speak of their satisfaction, peace, and assurance, and be quiet until you also have attained it? What is it that hinders this mercy that it cannot come home to your souls? Is it your neglect of duty? O, stir up your selves to take hold of God. Is it want of a through search and examination of your estate? O, let not thine eyes find rest, till that be fully done: Is it some special guilt upon thy soul that grieves the Spirit of God? Be restless till it be removed. I know this mercy is not at your command, do what you can do; but yet I also know when God bestows it, he usually doth it in these ways of our duty.

Secondly: To those that once had, but now want this blessing, who say as *Job* 29. 2, 3. *O that it were with me as in days past!* The darkness is the greater to you, because you have walked in the light of the Lord. The sum of Christs Counsel in this case is given in three words, *Rev.* 2. 5. *Remember, Repent, Reform.* 2.

First: *Remember* (i. e.) ponder, consider, compare time with time, and

ſtate with ſtate, how well it once was, how ſad it now is.

Secondly: *Repent*, mourn over theſe your ſinful relapſes; ſure you may challenge the firſt place among all the mourners in the world. Your loſs is great. O, better to have loſt the light of your eyes, than this ſweet light of Gods countenance; your ſin hath ſeparated betwixt you and your God, O mourn over it.

Thirdly: *Reform*. Do your firſt works again. O Chriſtian, conſider thy heart is ſunk deeper into the world than it was wont to be. Thy duties are fewer, and thy zeal and affection to God much abated. Return, return, O back-ſliding ſoul, and labor to recover thy firſt love to Chriſt, what-ever pains it coſt thee.

3. Laſtly: To thoſe that do enjoy theſe choice and invaluable mercies, the Sealings of the Spirit.

Firſt: Take heed that you grieve not the good Spirit of God, *by whom you are Sealed to the day of Redemption*, Eph. 4. 30. He hath comforted you, don't you grieve him: The Spirit is a tender and delicate thing, you may quickly deprive your ſelves of his joy and peace. Se-

Secondly: Be humble under this advancement and dignity. If your hearts once begin to ſwell, look out for humbling diſpenſations quickly, 2 *Cor.* 12.7. This treaſure is always kept in the Veſſel of a contrite and humble heart.

Thirdly: Keep cloſe to duty; yea, tack one duty to another by intermediate Ejaculations. If care of duty be once remitted, you are not far from a ſad change of your condition.

Fourthly: Improve all Ordinances, eſpecially this great Sealing Ordinance for your farther confirmation and eſtabliſhment. Act your Faith to the uttermoſt of its ability upon Chriſt Crucified, and comfort will flow in: The more the direct acts of Faith are exerciſed, the more powerful and ſweet its reflex acts are like to be.

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THE

# THE FIFTH MEDITATION UPON

Joh. 1. 29. *Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the Sins of the World.*

THE scope of this Chapter is to prove the Divinity and Eternal God-head of Jesus Christ. One of those Arguments, by which this great Article of Faith is confirmed and proved, is the Testimony of *John*. This testimony of *John* is the more remarkable, because it was before Propheſied of him, that when the *Messiah* should come, this Messenger should go before his face to prepare the way for him, *Mal.* 3. 1.

Now

Now among all the Teſtimonies that ever *John* gave of Chriſt, none ever was, or could be more full and clear than this in the Text.

*Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the Sin of the World.*

In which words are remarkable,

1. The Preface to his Teſtimony.
2. The Teſtimony it ſelf.

Firſt: The Preface or Introduction to *Johns* Teſtimony; *Behold*, there is a double uſe in Scripture of this word. Sometimes it's uſed by way of *Indication*, and ſometimes by way of *Excitation*. In the firſt it points out the perſon; in the laſt it raiſes our affections to him. In this place it hath both theſe Uſes. 1.

*Behold the Lamb of God.* q. d. This is the great expectation and hope of all Ages. This perſon whom you behold, is the deſire of all Nations. Loe, this is God manifeſt in fleſh. This is the great Sacrifice, *the Lamb of God.* Never did humane eyes behold ſuch an object before.

Secondly: The teſtimony it ſelf, 2.

which

which must be considered two ways, as it respects,

1. The truth and reality } of Christ
2. The vertue and dignity } its object.

First: *Johns* Testimony respects the the truth and reality of the object; this is ὁ ἀμνὸς, the Lamb of God, the very *Antitype* to which all legal Sacrifices had respect, and from which they derived all their value and vertue, grace and truth came by Christ, as he had said before, *ver.* 17. The Paschal Lamb, and Lamb for daily Sacrifice, were but the Types and Shadows of this Lamb of God.

Secondly: His Testimony respects the vertue and dignity of Christ and his Blood. *He taketh away the Sin of the World.* The Greek word, αἴρων (as a Learned *Critick* observes) answers both the Hebrew words נשא סבל and *Isa.* 53. and signifies not only to bear, but to bear away *portando expiat, expiando aufert, efficitque ut remittatur.* By bearing sin, he expiates it; and by expiating, takes it away, or procures the remission

*De Dieu.*

miſſion of it. The expreſſion ſeems to allude to the *ſcape Goat*, mentioned, *Levit.* 16. 22. Thus Chriſt really and wholly takes away the ſin of the world, (*i. e.*) the ſin of all Believers in the world, for whom he was Sacrificed, as *Druſius* well expounds it, concurrent with the ſtream of ſound Expoſitors.

So that this is a very full Teſtimony which *John* gives to *Chriſt*, and it is given with great affection and admiration of him: *Behold*, yea, admire in beholding the Lamb of God which taketh away the ſin of the world; behold him with affections ſuitable to ſuch an object. *Ecce perſona à Deo ordinata in victimam ad expiandum peccata.* Grotius. Behold the perſon appointed by God for a Sacrifice to expiate ſin. Now though this Scripture be very fruitful in practical obſervations, yet it is not my purpoſe at this time to note or proſecute any of them, except this one, which riſes from the præfatory particle, or that note of admiration, with which *Johns* Teſtimony of Chriſt is uſher'd in. *Behold the Lamb of God.* And the note thence will be this:

Doct.

Doct.

*That Jesus Christ the Lamb of God, is to be beheld with admiration and affection suitable to such an object.*

Christ is beheld by men three ways.

1. First: *Carnally*, with an eye of flesh. So men saw him in the days of his flesh, and despised him, *Isa.* 53. 2. Carnal eyes saw no beauty in him that he should be desired.

2. Secondly: *Fiducially*, by the eye of Faith, believing is seeing Christ, *Joh.* 6. 40. Faith is to the Saints instead of eyes; by it they make Christ present, though the Heavens have received him out of our carnal sight.

3. Thirdly: *Beatifically*, by the glorified eye. So the spirits of just men made perfect, do by their mental eye see him in glory, and all the Saints after the Resurrection, shall with these Corporeal eyes, see their Redeemer, according to *Job* 19. 26, 27.

The sight of Christ by Faith (which is all the sight of him that any man now hath, or can have in this world) as it is much more excellent than the first, for *blessed are they that have not seen and yet believe*,

*believe*, Joh. 20. 29. So it is much inferiour to the laſt, 1 *Cor.* 13. 12. *For now we ſee darkly through a glaſs, but then face to face.* But though it be an inferior Viſion, in reſpect of that which is immediate and perfect, yet the eye of Faith is a precious eye, and the Viſions of Chriſt by Faith, are raviſhing Viſions; and he that beholds Chriſt, the Lamb of God, by a ſteddy fixed eye of faith, cannot but admire, and be deeply affected with ſuch a ſight of him. The views of Chriſt by Faith are raviſhing and tranſporting views, 1 *Pet.* 1. 8. *Whom having not ſeen, ye love, in whom though now ye ſee him not; yet believing, ye rejoyce with joy unſpeakable, and full of glory.*

It is a diſparagement to ſo glorious an object as Chriſt, to behold him and not wonder; to ſee, and not love him. Certainly the admiration, love, delight, and joy of our hearts, are all at the command of Faith: For let us but conſider what raviſhing excellencies are in Chriſt, for the eye of a Believer to behold and admire.

1. First; God is in Chriſt, 2 *Cor.* 5. 19. He is God manifeſt in the fleſh, 1 *Tim.* 3. 16. A God Incarnate, is the worlds wonder:

wonder: Here is Finite and Infinite joyn'd in one; Eternity matcht with Time; the Creator and Creature making but one Perſon. *The Lord hath Created a new thing in the Earth, a Woman ſhall compaſs a Man*, Jer. 31. 22. 'Tis an argument of weakneſs to admire little things, and of ſtupidity not to admire great things. Many Miracles (ſaith one) were wrought by Chriſt in the fleſh; but the greateſt of all Miracles was his aſſumption of Fleſh.

Secondly: The Wiſdom of God is in Chriſt; yea, *in him are hid all the treaſures of Wiſdom and Knowledge*, Col. 2. 3. Never did the Divine Wiſdom diſplay its glorious beams in the eyes of Men and Angels in any work of God, ſince the beginning of time, as it hath done in the deſignation of Chriſt, to be the Lamb of God, a Sacrifice for ſin. *Behold the Lamb of God*; and in him, behold the unſearchable Wiſdom of God, in recovering the Elect perfectly from all the danger of ſin, and yet making ſin more dreadful to them by the way of their recovery from it, than ever it could be made by any other conſideration.

In-

Infinite Wiſdom in ſuiting the Sinners remedy to the cauſe of his diſeaſe. The Diſeaſe was the Pride of Man; the Remedy was the Humiliation of the Son of God. Man affected to be as God, that ruin'd him; God comes down, aſſumes fleſh, and will be found in faſhion as a man; that ſaved him.

O profound Wiſdom, which from the loſs and ruine of our Primitive glory, which was the undoing of us, ſoul and body, takes the occaſion of raiſing us to a far better ſtate, and ſettles us in it, with a much better ſecurity than the former.

Who but Jeſus Chriſt, the Wiſdom of God (as he is called, 1 *Cor.* 1. 24.) could ever have ordered and over-ruled the worſt of evils, ſo as by occaſion of the breach of the Law to raiſe more glory to God than ever could have been given to him, by the moſt punctual obſervation of its commands, or by the moſt rigorous execution of its penalties. O the aſtoniſhing depth of Wiſdom.

Thirdly: The *love* of God is in Chriſt. Behold the Lamb of God! and in him, behold the love of God in the higheſt and moſt triumphant diſco- 3.

very

very that ever was or can be made of it in this world, 1 *Joh.* 4. 10. *Herein is love, not that we loved him, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the Propitiation for our sins.* O here, here is the love of God to Sinners; he manifests love to us in our daily provisions, protections, deliverances, and comforts. That we have health when others groan under pains, therein is love. That we have bread to eat, when others are ready to perish, therein is love. O, but to have Christ to be a Propitiation for us, when the Angels that fell were left desperate, therein was love indeed. All the love that breaks out in the variety of providences for us in this world, in our Health and Estates, in our Relations and Comforts, is nothing compar'd with this love. *Herein is love indeed.*

4. Fourthly: The tender *mercies* of God over poor Sinners are in Christ, as Christ is the mercy promised, *Luk.* 1. 72. the capital mercy, so he is the Chanel through which all the streams of Gods mercy flow freely to the Sons of men, *Jude* 21. the mercy of God to Eternal life, or his saving mercies are only dispenced to us through Jesus Christ. *Be-*

*hold*

*hold the Lamb of God!* A Lamb prepared by the aſtoniſhing mercy of God, a Sacrifice for us, when no Sacrifice is laid out for fallen Angels. Mercy alone hath made this difference; mercy opened its tender eye, and looked through Chriſt upon us in the depth of our miſery. In Chriſt it is that the milder attribute of mercy is exerciſed upon us, whilſt ſevere Juſtice puniſhes them.

Fifthly: All the hopes of poor Sinners are in Chriſt, *Col.* 1. 27. Take away Chriſt, and where is the hope of our ſouls? 1 *Tim.* 1. 1. 'Tis by the Blood of the Lamb that we have hope towards God: In his Oblation and no where elſe our hope of Salvation finds footing. On him it is the Anchor of hope is fixed, and the ſoul ſtayed when the ſtorms of fear and inward trouble do ariſe and beat violently upon it. 5.

Sixthly: The Salvation of our ſouls to Eternity is in Chriſt, *Acts* 4. 12. *Neither is there any other name given under Heaven, by which we muſt be ſaved.* He is the Ark in whom we are preſerved, *Jude ver.* 1. Look as the ſprinkling of the Blood of the *Paſchal Lamb* upon 6.

upon the Door-posts of the *Israelites* was that which preserved them from the destroying Angel, so the Blood of Christ the Lamb of God Typified by that Blood, saves Believers from the wrath to come.

But who can open the unsearchable riches, or recount the ravishing excellencies found in Christ? Angels and the Spirits of just men made perfect behold and admire for ever-more the incomparable excellencies of Christ. Heaven would be no Heaven to them, if they could not behold Christ there, *Psal.* 73. 25.

But my business rather lies in improving this point, than endeavouring farther to unfold it; for new wonders will appear in Christ, if we behold him to Eternity.

*Use.* And all the improvement I shall make of it shall be in one use of *Exhortation*, bespeaking every one of you what ever your present condition and estate be, *to behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.* And

1. First: If there be found among you any that are sensible of a stony hard heart which cannot relent and mourn for

for all the wrong done to Jeſus Chriſt by ſin, whoſe affections are benum'd and ſtupified by ſin; ſo that no conſiderations they can urge upon their own hearts, are able to thaw them, & cauſe a relenting pang for ſin. To ſuch I would direct the words of this Text, as the moſt effectual means to melt ſuch hearts. Look hither hard heart, *Behold the Lamb of God.* Conſider, believe and apply what is here ſenſibly repreſented, and thy heart is hard indeed if it relent not upon ſuch a view of Chriſt. It's ſaid *Zech.* 12. 10. *They ſhall look upon me, whom they have pierced, and mourn.* Behold the Son of God brought as a Lamb to the Slaughter for thee a vile polluted Sinner: Behold the invaluable Blood of this Sacrifice ſhed for thee: Bring thy thoughts cloſe to this ſubject; think who it is that was made a Lamb for Sacrifice, for whom he endured all his unſpeakable ſufferings, how meekly and willingly he endured all the wrath of God and men; ſtanding in his perfect Innocency to be ſlain for thee: Behold, he was made ſin for thee, who had no ſin; that thou who hadſt no Righteouſneſs, mightſt be made the Righteouſneſs of God in him.

O,

O, who ever loved thee at that rate Christ hath done? Who would endure that misery that Christ did endure for thy sake? Would thy Father, or the Wife of thy bosom, or thy Friend that is as thy own soul, be content to feel that for thee (though but one hour) which Christ felt when his sweat was as it had been great drops of Blood falling down to the ground! Nay, thou wouldst never taste such a cup for the saving of thine own Child, as Christ drank off, when he cried, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* Behold how he loved thee?

Surely if the Rocks rent asunder at his passion, thy heart is harder than a Rock, if it thaw not at such a sight as this. Fix thine eyes a while here, and thine eye will affect thy heart.

2. Secondly: Is there any among us that make too light of sin, and are easily overcome by every temptation to the commission of it. O come hither and *behold the Lamb of God*, and you cannot possibly have slight thoughts of sin after such a sight of Christ. See here the price of sin, behold what it cost the Lord Jesus Christ to expiate it. Did he come into the world as a Lamb,

bound

bound with the bands of an irreverſible decree to die for ſin? Did he come from the Boſom of the Father to be our Ranſomer, and that at the price of his own life? Did the hand of ſevere Juſtice ſhed the Heart-blood of this Immaculate Lamb to ſatisfie for the wrong thy ſins have done to God? and yet canſt thou look upon ſin as a light matter? God forbid.

I remember when the Worthies of *Iſrael* brake through the Hoſt of the *Philiſtims*, and brought unto *David* the waters of the well of *Bethlehem*: It's ſaid, 2 *Sam.* 23. 17. *he would not drink thereof, but powered it out before the Lord, and ſaid, Be it far from me that I ſhould do this; is not this the Blood of the men that went in Jeopardy of their lives.*

He longed for it, and yet would not taſte it, how pleaſant ſoever it would have been to him, conſidering what hazard was run to obtain it.

Ah Chriſtian, it was but the hazard of their Blood that gave cheque to *David's* appetite to the water; and if the water had coſt an equal quantity of their blood, yet it had been but a low argument to diſſwade him from drinking it, to this conſideration that now

lies before thee. Thy ſin actually coſt the Blood of Chriſt, one drop whereof is more valuable than all humane blood; and yet wilt thou not deny thy Luſts, nor reſiſt a temptation for his ſake? *Behold the Lamb of God ſlain for thy ſin*, and thou canſt never have ſlight thoughts of it any more.

Thirdly: Is there any among you that droop, and are diſcouraged in their ſpirits, becauſe of their manifold aggravated Iniquities? who being over-weighed with the burdenſome ſenſe of ſin, deſpond and ſink in their minds: to ſuch I would apply the words of my Text as a ſoveraign Cordial to revive their hearts and hopes. *Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the ſin of the world.*

If the Blood of the Lamb can take away the ſin of the world, it can take away thy ſin, though there be a world of ſin in thee: For do but conſider Chriſt as *deſigned* from Eternity to be our *Propitiation*, Joh. 6. 27. *Him hath God the Father Sealed*, as Sacrificed in our room in the fulneſs of time, 1 Cor. 5. 7. *Chriſt our Paſſover is Sacrificed for us*, as *accepted* by the Father with greateſt content and pleaſure; even as a *ſweet*

*ſweet ſmelling ſavor*, Eph. 5. 2. as publiquely *juſtified* and diſcharged by God the *Creditor* at his Reſurrection, 1 *Tim.* 3. 16. and *John* 16. 9. And laſtly, Conſider him as now in Heaven, where he *appears before God for us, as a Lamb that had been ſlain*, Rev. 5. 6. bearing the very marks of his death, and preſenting them before God, as the moſt effectual and moving plea to procure pardon and mercy for his people. Let theſe things, I ſay, be duely pondred, and nothing will be found more effectual to relieve the deſpondent minds of poor Believers againſt the ſinking ſenſe of their ſin.

He that repreſents himſelf in the Sacrament as wounded for you, ſhews at the ſame time, to the Father in Heaven, the real Body that was wounded; than which, nothing more effectually moves mercy, or ſtays the ſliding feet of a poor Believers hope: And that whether we conſider,

First: The dignity of that body which was wounded, the moſt hallowed and deeply ſanctified thing that ever was created, *Luk.* 1. 35. *That holy thing.* Hallowed

Secondly: Or his *Vicegerency* in ſuffering, *He was wounded for our Tranſgreſſions*, Iſa. 53. 5. It was for that hard, proud, vain, dead heart that thou complaineſt of: Or

Thirdly: The *end* and *deſign* of thoſe wounds which was to repair the Honour of God, and the violated Law; the language of that blood (which is ſaid to ſpeak better things than the blood of *Abel*, Heb. 12. 24.) is this.

Father, have theſe poor ſouls wounded thy Name, thine Honour, thy Law? Behold the wounds thy Juſtice hath inflicted on me for reparation of all that wrong they have done thee! Oh how ſweetly doth the Blood of the Lamb ſettle the Conſcience of a poor drooping Believer!

4. Fourthly: Is there any among you that are faint-hearted and ready to ſhrink away from any ſufferings for Chriſt, as unable to bear and endure any thing for his ſake? To ſuch I would ſay in the words of this Text: *Behold the Lamb of God.* Did Chriſt ſuffer ſuch grievous things for you, and cannot you ſuffer ſmall matters for him? Alas, what is the wrath of man to the wrath of the great and terrible God! Beſide, he

he was an Innocent Lamb, and deſerved not to ſuffer the leaſt degree of penal evil upon his own account, but thou haſt deſerved Hell, and yet ſhrinkeſt under the ſufferings of a moment. Did he ſuffer ſo much for you, and can you ſuffer nothing for him? Surely he in ſuffering for you hath *left you an example that you ſhould follow his ſteps*, 1 Pet. 2. 21. What is our Blood compar'd in dignity to the Blood of Chriſt? What are our ſufferings compar'd in kind or degree, to the ſufferings of Chriſt? Nothing is found to fortifie a mans ſpirit for ſufferings, as the Meditation of Chriſts ſufferings for us doth.

Fifthly: Is there any among you that are impatient under your own perſonal tryals and troubles, apt to howl under common afflictions from the hand of God, or ſwell with revenge under injuries from the hands of men? To ſuch I would ſay, *Behold the Lamb of God.* Was Chriſt a *Lamb* for meekneſs, and art thou a *Lyon* for fierceneſs? Was he ſilent, not once opening his mouth when he ſuffered moſt vile things from the hands of Sinners, and can you bear nothing? He ſuffered pa- 5.

tiently, and deſerved it not; you ſuffer impatiently, and have deſerved infinitly more.

O that you would learn to be more Chriſt-like in all your tryals & afflictions. Let it not be ſaid that Chriſt carried it as a *Lamb*, when he was tried; and we like *Swine* grumbling, or houling when we are tried. O get a Chriſt-like temper.

6. Sixthly: Is there any among you that ſtagger at the promiſes through unbelief? That cannot rely upon a word of promiſe, becauſe their own unbelieving hearts fill them with unworthy ſuſpicions of the power, faithfulneſs, or willingneſs of God to perform them to them. O that ſuch would behold the Lamb of God, as repreſented in this Ordinance! Are not all the promiſes of God Sealed to Believers in the Blood of this Lamb, *Heb.* 9. 17, 18, 19, 20. Are not all the promiſes of God in Chriſt, Yea, and Amen to all that are in him? 2 *Cor.* 1. 20. Or is there any thing put into any promiſe of greater value than the Blood of the Lamb that was ſhed to purchaſe it? Or is not the giving of Chriſt to die for us, the accompliſhment of the greateſt

greateſt promiſe that ever God made to us? And after the fulfilling thereof, what ground remains for any to doubt the fulfiling of leſſer promiſes?

Laſtly: Is there any among you that 7.
deſire to get up your affections at this Table; to have your hearts in a melting temper, to awaken and rouze up all the powers of your ſouls in ſo great an occaſion for it as this. *Behold the Lamb of God*, and this will do it.

Chriſt calls off your eyes and thoughts from all other objects to himſelf, *Iſa.* 65. 11. *I ſaid, behold me, behold me.* Fix the eye of Faith here, and you will feel a pang quickly coming upon your hearts like that, *Cant.* 2. 5. *Stay me with Flaggons, comfort me with Apples, I am ſick with love.* Your eye will affect your hearts: Whilſt you behold, your hearts will melt within you.

## THE SIXTH
# MEDITATION
## UPON

Rom. 8. ver. 32. *He that ſpared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how ſhall he not with him alſo freely give us all things?*

THIS Scripture contains a moſt weighty argument to encourage and confirm the Faith of Chriſtians in the expectation of all ſpiritual and temporal mercies. It proceeds from the greater to the leſſer affirmatively. He that delivered his Son for us, what can he deny us after ſuch a gift? every word hath its weight.

Did

Did not God ſpare *(i. e.)* abate any thing which his juſtice could inflict upon his *Son*, his *own* Son, oppoſed here to his *adopted* Sons, as being infinitly more excellent than they, and moſt dear to him above and beyond all others; but on the contrary, *delivered him up*, how dear ſoever he was unto him, to Humiliation, contradiction of Sinners, to all ſorrows and temptations, yea to death, and that of the Croſs, and all this *for us*, for us Sinners, for us Enemies to God, for us unlovely Wretches: *How ſhall he not with him alſo freely give us all things?* How is it imaginable that God ſhould with-hold after this, ſpirituals or temporals from his people? How ſhall he not call them effectually, juſtifie them freely, ſanctifie them throughly, and glorifie them eternally? How ſhall he not cloath them, feed them, protect and deliver them?

Surely if he would not ſpare or abate to his own Son one ſtroke, one tear, one groan, one ſigh, one circumſtance of miſery; it can never be imagined that ever he ſhould after this deny or with-hold from his people, for whoſe ſakes all this was ſuffered, any mercies, any

comforts, any priviledge ſpiritual or temporal, which is good for them, and needful to them.

So that in the words we find,

1. A Propoſition.
2. An Inference from it.

The Propoſition opens the ſeverity of Gods juſtice to Chriſt; the Inference declares the riches of his mercy to us in Chriſt.

1. Firſt: We have here before us a Propoſition containing the ſeverity of Divine Juſtice towards Chriſt: And this is expreſſed two ways.

*Viz.*
1. Negatively, he ſpared him not.
2. Affirmatively; he delivered him up for us.

1. Firſt: Negatively: He ſpared not his own Son. There is a three-fold mercy in God, *viz.* *Preventing mercy*, which ſteps between us and trouble. *Delivering mercy*, which takes us out of the hand of trouble: And *Sparing mercy*, which though it do not prevent nor deliver, yet it mitigates, allays, and graciouſly

ciously moderates our troubles; and though ſparing mercy be deſirable and ſweet, yet it is the leaſt and loweſt ſort of mercy that God exerciſes towards any. Though it be mercy to have the time of ſufferings ſhortned, or one degree of ſuffering abated; yet theſe are the loweſt and leaſt effects of mercy, and yet theſe were denied to Jeſus Chriſt, when he ſtood in our room to ſatisfie for us. God ſpared not one drop, he abated not one degree of that wrath which Chriſt was to ſuffer for us.

Secondly: Affirmatively. But on the contrary, *he delivered him up for us all.* 2.

He delivered him, as a Judge by ſentence of Law delivers up the Priſoner to be Executed. 'Tis true, *Pilate* delivered him to be Crucified, and he alſo gave himſelf for us; but betwixt Gods delivering, *Pilates* delivering, and his own, there is this difference to be obſerved.

In *God* it was an Act of higheſt Juſtice.

In *Pilate* an Act of greateſt wickedneſs.

In *himſelf*, an Act of wonderful obedience.

God

God, as by an act of higheſt Juſtice, delivered him up *for us*. *For us*, notes the Vicegerency of his ſufferings, not only for our good as the final cauſe, nor only for our ſins as the meritorious cauſe, but for us (*i. e.*) in our room, place, or ſtead, according to 1 *Pet.* 3.18. and 2 *Cor.* 5. 14.

Secondly: We have alſo here before us a moſt ſweet and comfortable inference and concluſion from this propoſition. If God have ſo delivered him, *how ſhall he not with him freely give us all things?* For Chriſt comprehends all other mercies in himſelf, therefore in giving him for us, all other mercies are neceſſarily with him given to us.

And theſe mercies the pooreſt weakeſt Believer in the world may warrantably expect from God. For as God delivered him for us all, ſo the treaſures of all ſpiritual and temporal mercies are thereby freely opened to us all, to the weak as well as to the ſtrong.

He ſaith not Chriſt was delivered for all abſolutely, but for us all, (*i. e.*) all that Believe, all that are Elected and called, in whoſe perſon it is manifeſt the Apoſtle here ſpeaks, as *Pareus*, on the place well obſerved.

Hence

Hence these two doctrinal conclusions fairly offer themselves.

1. Doct.

*That the rigor and severity of Divine Justice was executed upon Jesus Christ, when he suffered for us.*

2. Doct.

*That Believers may strongly infer the greatest of mercies to themselves, from the severity of Gods Justice to Jesus Christ.*

I would willingly speak to both these points at this time; each affording such proper matter of meditation to us in such a season as this.

To begin therefore with the first observation.

1. Doct.

*That the rigor and severity of Divine Justice was executed upon Jesus Christ, when he suffered for us: God did not spare him.*

In *Zach.* 13. 7. you have Gods Commission given to the Sword of Justice

Juſtice, to ſmite his own Son, and that without pitty. *Awake, O Sword, againſt my Shepherd, and againſt the man that is my fellow, ſmite the Shepherd*, &c. And when this Commiſſion came to be executed upon Chriſt, the Text tells us, *God did not ſpare him.* All the Vials of his wrath were poured out to the laſt drop.

Two things require our attention in this point.

1. Wherein the ſeverity of Juſtice to Chriſt appeared.

2. Why muſt Juſtice be executed on him in ſuch rigor and ſeverity? Why there could be no abatement, mitigation, or ſparing mercy ſhewn him in that day.

1. Firſt: Wherein the ſeverity of Divine Juſtice to Chriſt appeared.

And this will manifeſt it ſelf in the conſideration of the following particulars.

Firſt: Let us conſider what Chriſt ſuffered, and we ſhall ſee the ſeverity of Juſtice in his ſufferings, for he ſuffered all kinds of miſeries, and that in the moſt intenſe degrees of them. His ſufferings were from all hands, from Heaven, Earth, and Hell: From his Enemies

Enemies who Condemned him, Buffeted him, Reviled, Scourged and Crucified him. From his own Diſciples and followers, one of whom perfidiouſly betray'd him, another openly deny'd him, and all in the hour of his greateſt trouble forſook and abandoned him.

He ſuffered in his Body the moſt exquiſite torments; the Croſs was a cruel Engine of torment, and more ſo to him than any other, by reaſon of the excellent *Craſis* and temperament of his Body, and his moſt acute and delicate ſenſe; for as the *School-men* truly ſay, He was *optime complectionatus*, of the moſt exact and exquiſite Complexion; and his ſenſes remained acute and vigorous, no way blunted, during the whole time of his ſufferings, but full of life and ſenſe to the laſt gaſp, as may be gather'd from *Mark.* 15. 39. *When the* Centurion *which ſtood over againſt him, ſaw that he ſo cried out, and gave up the ghoſt; he ſaid, Truly this was the Son of God.*

He ſuffered in his ſoul; yea, the ſufferings of his ſoul, were the very ſoul of his ſufferings; he felt in his inner man the exquiſite torments and in-

inexpreſſible anguiſh of the wrath of God. Hence was that preternatural bloody ſweat in the Garden; and hence that heart-rending out-cry upon the Croſs, *My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me?*

In all which ſufferings from Heaven, from Earth, from Hell, from Friends, from Enemies, there was no allay or abatement of the leaſt degree of miſery. *God ſpared not his own Son* (ſaith the Text) *but delivered him up.* Wherein the ſeverity of Divine Juſtice to Jeſus Chriſt is diſplayed in theſe five remarkable conſiderations following.

1. Firſt: *God ſpared not*: If mercy, pity, and forbearance might be expected from any hand, ſurely it might be expected from God. He is the Fountain of mercy. *The Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy*, ſaith the Apoſtle, *Jam.* 5. 11. The moſt melting and tender compaſſions of a Mother to her Sucking Child, are but cruelty in compariſon with divine tenderneſs and mercy, *Iſa.* 49. 15. *Can a Woman forget her ſucking Child, that ſhe ſhould not have compaſſion upon the Son of her Womb; yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee.*

Can

*Can a Woman*, the more affectionate Sex forget her ſucking Child, her own Child, and not a Nurſing child only; her own Child whilſt it hangs on her breaſt, and with the Milk from her breaſt, draws love from her heart? Can ſuch a thing as this be in Nature? Poſſibly it may; ſome ſuch cruel Mothers may be found, but yet I will not forget thee, ſaith God. Though humane corrupt Nature may be ſo vitiated, yet from the Divine nature compaſſion and mercy are inſeparable. It flows as waters flow from their Fountain; only here it reſtrained it ſelf, and let not out one drop to Jeſus Chriſt in the day of his ſufferings. God, the God of mercy ſpared not.

Secondly: God *ſpared not*, ſaith the Text (*i. e.*) he abated not any thing which Juſtice could inflict. Chriſt was not ſpared one ſtroke, one tear, one groan, one drop, one ſigh, one ſhame, one circumſtance, no not the leaſt, which Juſtice could demand as ſatisfaction for mans ſin. 2.

There be divers kinds of mercy in God; there is in him, preventing mercy, delivering mercy, and ſparing mercy. Now ſparing mercy (as one well ob-

*Caryl on Job.* obſerves) is the loweſt mercy of all the three. 'Tis leſs mercy to be ſpared or abated ſome degree or circumſtance of miſery, than to have miſery prevented by mercies ſtepping in betwixt us and it. It's leſs alſo than to be wholly delivered out of the hand of miſery. Either of theſe are greater acts of mercy than to abate a degree, or ſhorten an hour of our trouble; the leaſt abatement of any one circumſtance of miſery had been ſparing mercy, though it had been but the leaſt and loweſt act of mercy; and yet even this was denyed to Chriſt, he was not abated one minute of time, or the leaſt degree of ſorrow God ſpared not.

3. Thirdly: He ſpared not *his own Son*, ὁ ἴδιος υἱὸς. So ſtiled *Signanter* his own or his proper Son, in a ſpecial and peculiar manner nearer and dearer to him than the *Angels*, who are his Sons by Creation, *Job* 1.6. or any of the Saints who are his Sons by grace, in the way of Regeneration and Adoption, *Joh.* 1. 12, 13. This was his own Son by Nature, a Son of an higher rank and order, *Pſal.* 2.7. begotten in an ineffable manner from all Eternity in his own divine eſſence; and ſo is his Son by Na-

Nature, having the ſame Eſſence and Nature with the Father, being co-equal, co-eſſential and co-eternal with the Father.

No relation in nature is ſo intimate ſtrict and dear as this; our Children are not ſo much our own Children, our bodies are not ſo much our own bodies, as Chriſt was Gods own Son; and yet though he were ſo dear to him, his other Self, his expreſs Image, his own dear Son, he ſpared him not. *God ſpared not his own Son.*

Fourthly: And that which makes a farther diſcovery of Divine ſeverity towards Jeſus Chriſt, is this; that God ſpared not his own Son in the day of his greateſt diſtreſs, when he cryed to his Father in an Agony, that if it were poſſible the cup might paſs from him: For of that day this Scripture is mainly to be underſtood, the day when he fell to the ground and pray'd, *That if it were poſſible, the hour might paſs. When he ſaid,* Abba, *Father, all things are poſſible to thee, take away this Cup from me,* Mark 14. 35, 36. He beheld his own dear Son ſweltering under the heavieſt preſſure of his wrath, ſweating great drops of Blood; crying, If it be poſſible, let this 4.

this hour, this cup paſs, and yet it could not be granted: O the ſeverity of God! He heard the cry of *Ahab*, and ſpared him; he heard the *Ninevites* cry, and ſpared them: He heard the cries of *Hagar* and *Iſhmael*, and ſpared them: Yea, he hears the young *Ravens*, when they cry, and feeds them: But when his own Son cryed with the moſt vehement cry, that the Cup might paſs, he cannot be excuſed, he muſt drink it up, even the very dregs of the Cup of trembling, and that to the laſt drop. O the Juſtice and Severity of God!

5. Fifthly and laſtly; Conſider what the Father of mercies did inſtead of ſparing the Son of his love, and the Text will inform you, *that he delivered him up for us all.* So 'tis noted in *Act.* 2. 23. *Him being delivered by the determinate Counſel and fore-knowledge of God, ye have taken, and with wicked hands have Crucified and Slain.*

There was a Conceſſion or Permiſſion to thoſe wicked Inſtruments that ſhed his Blood, a looſing of the chain to thoſe Ban-dogs, that compaſſed him about. Such a Conceſſion as was never given them before, for ſtill they were tyed up from perpetrating their wickedneſs,

neſs, and executing their malice till now, and this was the hour which he often ſpake of; *My hour is not yet come.* But O, what a diſmal hour was it, when it did come! when Providence let looſe both Devils and Men upon Chriſt! deliver'd him over to the will of his Enemies. And this was not all, Chriſt was not only delivered up into the hands of the worſt of men, but which was much more terrible, into the ſevere hands of Divine Juſtice, to grapple with the pure, unmixed, and unallayed Wrath of the great and terrible God.

Laſtly: We will improve this point in a double Uſe, by way of Information, and Exhortation.

### 1. *Uſe of Information.*

1 *Uſe.* Firſt: The Severity of Gods Juſtice to Jeſus Chriſt informs us what a dreadful evil ſin is, which ſo incenſes the Wrath of God, even againſt his own Son, when he bare our ſins, and ſtood before the Bar of God as our Surety.

Come hither, hard hearts, (hard indeed, if this cannot break them) you com-

complain you cannot see the evil of sin, so as to be deeply humbled for it; fix your eyes a while here, and intently consider the point in hand: Suppose you saw a tender and pitiful Father come into open Court with fury in his face, to charge his own, his only, and his most beloved Son; and prosecute him to death, and nothing able to satisfie him, but his blood; and be well pleased when he sees it shed: Would you not say, O, what horrid evil hath he done, it must be some deep wrong, some heinous crime that he is guilty of, else it could never be that his own Father could forget his bowels of pity and mercy; yet thus did the Wrath of God break forth against his dear Son, when he stood before the Bar as our Surety charged with the guilt of our sins.

9. Secondly: Learn hence, what a fearful thing it is to fall into the hands of the living God. Well might *Luther* cry out, *Nolo Deum absolutum.* Let me have nothing to do with an absolute God. Woe to them that stand before God in their own persons, without Christ; how will Justice handle them! *For if these things were done in the green Tree,*

*Tree, what ſhall be done in the dry Tree?* Luk. 23. 31. Did the Son of God fear, tremble, ſweat clods of Blood? Did he ſtand amaz'd, and fall into ſuch an Agony of ſoul when he drank that cup, which he knew in a few hours he ſhould drink up, and then never taſte the bitterneſs of it more: How ſad is their caſe, that muſt drink of that Cup for ever, a Cup that hath Eternity to the bottom!

Thirdly: How incomprehenſible and ravithing is the love of God to men, that would rather be ſo ſevere to Jeſus Chriſt, the darling of his ſoul, than make us the objects of his Wrath for ever! Which of you (though there be infinitely leſs tenderneſs in your hearts than in Gods) would lay your hands upon a Child, the worſt Child you have, and put him to death, for the ſake of the beſt Friend you have in the world! But God with his own hand delivered his Son, his only Son, that from everlaſting was the delight of his ſoul, who never offended him, to death, the moſt curſed and cruel death, and all this for Enemies; how unſpeakable is this love, and paſt finding out! 4.

Fourth-

4. Fourthly: Did not God ſpare his own Son; then let none of us ſpare our own ſins. Sin was that Sword which pierced Chriſt: O let ſorrow for ſin pierce your hearts; if you ſpare ſin, God will not ſpare you, *Deut.* 29, 20. We ſpare ſin when we faintly oppoſe it, when we excuſe, cover, and defend it; when we are impatient under juſt rebukes and reproofs for it; but all kindneſs to ſin, is cruelty to our own ſouls.

5. Fifthly and laſtly: If God did not ſpare Chriſt, certainly he intends to ſpare Believers for his ſake.

The *Surety* could not be ſpar'd, that the *Principal* might be ſpar'd for ever. If God had ſpared him, he could not have ſpared us; if he afflicts his People, it is not for ſatisfaction to himſelf, but profit to us, *Heb.* 12. 10. Should God ſpare the rod of Affliction, it would not be for our advantage. So many ſanctified afflictions as are ſpar'd or abated, ſo many mercies and ſpiritual advantages are with-held from us. But as for thoſe ſtrokes of Juſtice that are the effects of Gods Vindictive wrath, they ſhall never be felt by Believers for ever. All the Wrath, all the

the Curſe, all the Gall and Wormwood was ſqueez'd into Chriſt's Cup, and not one drop left to imbitter ours.

2. *Uſe of Exhortation.*

Did not God ſpare his own Son, but give him up to death for us all? Then poſſeſs your hearts fully in the aſſurance of this great truth, *That the greateſt and beſt of mercies ſhall not be denied or withheld from you, if you be in Chriſt.* Lay it down as a ſure concluſion of Faith, and build up your hope and comfort upon it This takes in the ſecond Obſervation, and ſurely never was any truth better fortified, never any inference more ſtrongly inferr'd. Henceforth may infer Temporal, Spiritual, and Eternal mercies; all muſt be yours if you be Chriſts, 1 *Cor.* 3. 21, 22, 23. Oh make ſure that Chriſt is yours, and never heſitate at any other mercy: For

First: God hath certainly a value and eſteem for his own Son infinitely above all other things: He is his *own Son*, his dear Son, *Col.* 1. 13. *the Beloved*, Eph. 1. 6. *The delight of his ſoul*, Iſa. 42. 1. Nothing is valued by God at that rate that Chriſt is valued. If

therefore he ſpare not the moſt excellent mercy, but parts with the very darling of his ſoul for us, how ſhall he deny or with-hold any leſſer inferior mercy? It is not to be imagined he is *the mercy* Emphatically ſo called, *Luk.* 1. 72.

Secondly: Jeſus Chriſt is a *Comprehenſive mercy*, including all other mercies in himſelf; he is the Tree of Life, all other mercies are but the fruits growing on him; he is the *Son of Righteouſneſs*, and what-ever comfort ſpiritual or natural refreſhes your ſouls or bodies, is but a *Beam* from that *Sun*, a Stream from that Fountain. If then God part with Chriſt to you, and for you, he will not with-hold other mercies; he will not give the whole Tree, and deny an Apple; beſtow the Fountain it ſelf, and deny you the Streams. All ſpiritual mercies are in him, and given with him, *Eph.* 1. 3. *Bleſſed be the God and Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who hath bleſſed us with all ſpiritual bleſſings, in Heavenly places in Chriſt Jeſus.* All *Temporals* are in him, and given with him, *Matth.* 6. 33. they are additionals to that great mercy.

Thirdly:

Thirdly: If God ſpared not Chriſt, the beſt mercy, but delivered him up for us all when we were his *Enemies*, then certainly he will not deny leſſer mercies when we are reconciled and made *Friends* to him. And this is the forcible reaſon of the Apoſtle, which even compels aſſent, *Rom.* 5. 9. *Much more being now juſtified by his Blood, we ſhall be ſaved from wrath through him.* In a word,

Fourthly and laſtly: If it were the very deſign and intention of God in not ſparing his own Son, to open thereby a dore for all mercies to be let in upon us, then 'tis not imaginable he ſhould with-hold them. He will not loſe his deſign, nor lay ſo many ſtripes upon Chriſt in vain: Some ſhall ſurely have the benefit of it, and none ſo capable as Believers.

When God ſpared not his own Son, this was the deſign of it, and could you know the thoughts of his heart, they would appear to be ſuch as theſe.

I will now manifeſt the *fierceneſs of my Wrath* to Chriſt, and the *fulneſs of my Love* to Believers. The *pain* ſhall be his, that the *eaſe* and *reſt* may be theirs; the *ſtripes* his, and the *healing balm* iſſu-

ing from them, theirs. The *Condemnation* his, and the *Justification* theirs. The *Reproach* and *Shame* his, and the *Honour* and *Glory* theirs. The *Curse* his, and the *Blessing* theirs. The *Death* his, and the *Life* theirs. The *Vinegar* and *Gall* his, the sweet of it theirs. He shall groan, and they shall triumph: He shall mourn, that they may rejoyce: His heart shall be heavy for a time, that theirs may be light and glad for ever. He shall be forsaken, that they may never be forsaken: Out of the worst of miseries to him, shall spring the sweetest of mercies to them. O Grace, Grace, beyond the conception of the largest mind, the expression of the tongues of Angels.

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THE

## THE SEVENTH
# MEDITATION
## UPON

Mark. 9. 24. *And straight-way the Father of the Child cried and said, with tears, Lord I Believe, help my Unbelief.*

THE occasion of these words is to be gather'd from the Context, and briefly it was this; A tender Father brings a possessed Child to Christ to be cured, with a *Si potes*, a doubting question, *If thou canst do any thing, have compassion upon us, and help us.* Words imparting much natural affection and tender love to his Child. Have Compassion [upon us] and [help us] If the Child be

ſick, the Parent is not well. What touches the Child is felt by his Father.

And as they import his natural *affection* to his Child, ſo alſo, his own ſpiritual diſeaſe, or the weakneſs of his Faith. His Child was poſſeſt with a dumb Devil, and himſelf with unbelieving doubts and ſuſpitions of Chriſts ability to cure his Child: The Child had a ſick *body*, and the Father an infirm *ſoul*. *Satan* afflicted one by a *poſſeſſion*, and the other by *temptation*, ver. 22.

Chriſt returns his doubting language upon himſelf, *ver.* 23. *If thou canſt believe, all things are poſſible to him that believeth.* q. d. Doſt thou doubt of my ability to heal thy Child? queſtion rather thy own ability to believe for his cure: If he be not heal'd, the cauſe will not be in my *inability*, but in thine own *infidelity*: Which he ſpeaks not to inſinuate that Faith was in his own power, but to convince him of his weakneſs, and drive him to God for aſſiſtance, which effect it obtain'd; for immediately, *he cry'd out and ſaid with tears, Lord I believe, help thou mine unbelief.*

O how good is it for men to be brought into the ſtraights of affliction ſometimes? Had not this man fallen into this diſtreſs, it's not like that he had (at leaſt not ſo ſoon) arrived either to the ſenſe of his *grace*, or the *weakneſs* of it.

In the words we may note theſe three parts.

Firſt: A profeſſion of his Faith, *Lord I believe.*

Secondly: A ſenſe of the weakneſs of his Faith, *Help thou my unbelief.* 2.

Thirdly: The affection with which both were uttered, *He cried out, and ſaid with tears.* If theſe tears proceeded from the ſenſe and feeling of divine power inabling him to believe, as ſome think, than they were tears of joy, and would inform us of this great truth. 3.

*That the leaſt and loweſt meaſure of true Faith is matter of joy, unſpeakable to the poſſeſſor of it.* Doct. 1.

If they proceeded from the ſenſe of the weakneſs of his faith, then they give us this note.

*That the remainders of unbelief in the people of God, do coſt them many tears, they are the burdens and ſorrows of gracious ſouls.* Doct. 2.

1. Doct.

*That the least and lowest measure of Faith, is matter of joy unspeakable to the possessor of it.*

The Apostle in the 2 *Pet.* 1. 1. calls it *precious Faith*, and it well deserves that *Epithet*; for the least and lowest degree of saving Faith is of invaluable excellency, as will appear in these particulars.

1. First: The least degree of saving faith truly unites the soul to Jesus Christ, and makes it as really a branch or member of him, as *Moses*, *Abraham*, or *Paul* were.

All saving Faith receives Christ, *Joh.* 1. 12. Indeed the strong Believer receives him with a stronger and stedier hand than the weak one doth, who staggers, doubts, and trembles, but yet receives him, and consequently is as much interessed in the blessed priviledges flowing from Union, as the greatest Believer in the world. Such are Christs complacency in our persons and duties, his sympathy with us in our troubles and affections, and our interest

tereſt in his perſon and purchaſe. And is not this matter of exceeding joy? Is it not enough to melt, yea, overwhelm the heart of a poor Sinner to diſcover and feel that in his own heart, which entitles him to ſuch mercies.

Secondly: From the leaſt degree of ſaving faith we may infer as plenary a remiſſion of ſin, as from the ſtrongeſt. The weakeſt Believer is as compleatly pardoned as the ſtrongeſt, *Act.* 10. 43. *By him all that believe are juſtified from all things.* All that believe without difference of ſizes, ſtrength, or degrees, the leaſt as well as the greateſt, the Believer of a day old, as well as the Fathers and Worthies of greateſt name and longeſt ſtanding. 2.

Loe then the leaſt meaſure of faith intitles thee as really to the greateſt bleſſing, as the higheſt acts of faith can do. 'Tis true, the ſtronger the acting of faith is, the clearer the evidence uſually is, but intereſt in the priviledge is the ſame in both. If then thou canſt diſcern but the weakeſt act, and ſmalleſt meaſure of faith in thy ſoul, haſt thou not reaſon with him in the *Text*, to cry out and ſay with tears, *Lord I belive.* Canſt thou receive and read this Par-

don, the pardon of ſuch and ſo many ſins, and not wet it with thy tears: O it's matter of joy unſpeakable.

Thirdly: The leaſt degree of ſaving faith infers thy Election of God; and if that be not matter of melting and tranſporting conſideration, nothing is? O, it's matter of more joy, that our names are written in the Book of Life, than that the Devils are ſubject to us, *Luk.* 10. 20. From hence it may be inferr'd, that we are choſen of God, *Act.* 13. 48. *As many as were ordained to eternal life, believed.*

4. Fourthly: The leaſt meaſure of ſaving faith is a mercy greater than moſt men ever partake of.

'Tis true, God is rich and bountiful in the gifts of Providence to others, they have the good things of this life, many of them more than their hearts can wiſh, *Pſal.* 73. 7. He enricheth many of them alſo with endowments of the mind, natural and moral knowledge and wiſdom, yea, and adorns them with *Homilitical Vertues*, that render them very deſirable and lovely in their converſes with men; but there are but few, to whom he gives ſaving faith, *Iſa.* 53. 1. Believers are

are but a small remnant among men.

Fifthly and lastly: He that hath any, the least degree of saving faith, hath that which shall never be taken away from him, all other excellencies go away at death, *Job* 4. 21. But this is a spring that never fails, it springs up into everlasting life, *Joh.* 4. 14. A man may out-live his Friends and Familiars, his Estate and Health, his Gifts and Natural parts, but not his Faith, how great matter of joy and comfort is wrapt up in the least degree of Faith.

### 1. *Use of tryal.*

It concerns us then to examine our selves whether our Faith be true, be it more or less, stronger or weaker, and till we discern its truth, it will yield us but little comfort.

I confess weak Believers are under great disadvantages to comfort, small and weak things being usually very inevident and undiscernable; but yet in this example before us, we find weak faith was made evident, though much unbelief was mixed with it. *Lord I believe, help thou my unbelief.* In which words

words, many very useful signs of true though weak faith, did appear, and they are very relieving to weak Believers to consider them. O that we might find the like in us.

First: His Faith gave him a tender melting heart. *He cry'd out, and said with tears.* Doth your faith melt your hearts, either in the sense of your own vileness, or of the riches of free grace to such vile Creatures?

Secondly: His Faith gave him a deep sense of his remaining unbelief, and burdened his heart with it, *Help my unbelief:* And sure so will yours, if it be but as a grain of Mustard-seed in you.

Thirdly: His weak Faith carried him to Christ in fervent prayers and cries for his help to subdue unbelief in him, and so will yours if your Faith be right. Oh how often do the People of God go to the Throne of Grace upon that Errand! Help Lord, my heart is dead, vain, and very unbelieving; there's no dealing with it in my own strength: Father, help me.

Fourthly: His Faith made him hunger and thirst after greater measures of it. *Help my unbelief,* (i.e.) Lord

cure

cure it, that I may believe with more ſtrong and ſteddy acts of Faith; that I may not queſtion thy power any more, or ſay, *If thou canſt do any thing.* Why thus will it be with you, if you be true Believers, *Luk.* 17. 5. *Lord* (ſaid the Diſciples) *increaſe our Faith.*

Fifthly: There was a conflict in his ſoul betwixt Faith and Infidelity, Grace and Corruption, and this very ſenſible to him, faith inclining him one way, and unbelief carrying him another; and hence he ſpeaks like a man greatly diſtreſſed betwixt the workings of contrary principles in his own ſoul, and ſo you will alſo find it in your ſelves, *Gal.* 5. 17. *The fleſh luſteth againſt the ſpirit, and the ſpirit againſt the fleſh, ſo that ye cannot do the things that ye would.*

2. *Uſe of Conſolation.*

Well then, bleſs the Lord for the leaſt degree of ſaving Faith, and be not ſo diſcouraged at its imperfections as to over-look and ſlight the ſmaleſt working of faith in your ſouls. This poor man was deeply ſenſible of his unbelief, and yet at the ſame inſtant truly thank- 2. *Uſe.*

thankful for a ſmall meaſure of Faith, and ſo ſhould you. For

First: The leaſt meaſure of ſaving Faith is more than all Creatures power could produce: 'Tis the faith of the operation of God, *Col.* 2. 12. 'tis the work of God that ye believe, *Joh.* 6. 29. Yea, 'tis the exceeding greatneſs of his power to us-ward, who believe according to the working of his mighty power, *Eph.* 1. 19, 20. No Miniſters of Chriſt, how excellent ſoever their gifts are, no duties or ordinances; no labour or diligence of your own, without this mighty power of God, can ever bring you to Faith.

Secondly: 'Tis juſt matter of wonder and aſtoniſhment that ever one ſpark of faith was kindled in ſuch an heart as thine is; an heart which had no prediſpoſition or inclination in the leaſt to believe; yea, it was not *raſa tabula*, like clean paper, void of any impreſſion of faith, but fill'd with contrary impreſſions to it; ſo that it's marvelous that ever your hearts received the ſtamp or impreſſion of faith on them.

It

It was wonderful that fire should fall from Heaven, and burn upon the *Altar*, when *Elijah* had laid the wood in order upon it, but much more when he poured so much water upon it, as not only wet all the wood, but fill'd the Trenches, 1 *King.* 18. 33. Just so was the case of thy soul Reader, when God came to kindle faith there. Thy heart was dark and ignorant, neither acquainted with God or thy own condition; yea, thy heart was a *proud* heart, full of self-righteousness and self-conceitedness, *Rev.* 3. 17. *Rom.* 10. 3. a heart that would rather venture Eternal Damnation, than deny Self, and submit to Christ; and yet the light of the Lord must shine into this darkness, and the pride and stiffness of thy heart must be broken and brought to yield, or there is no believing.

Beside: How many and mighty Enemies did oppose the work of Faith in thy soul? Among which Satan, and thy own carnal reasonings were the principal, 2 *Cor.* 10. 4. By them what strong holds and fortifications were raised to secure thee from the strokes of conviction, and made way for Faith. Let but the state of thine own heart as

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it was by nature, be considered; and thou wilt say, it is the wonderful work of God that ever thou wast brought in any degree to believe.

Thirdly: Though thy Faith be weak, yet it is growing, if it be saving faith. The largest Tree was once but a Kernel or Acorn: The most famous Believer at first but a weak and doubting one. Be not discouraged therefore, God will fulfil all the good pleasure of his *goodness* in you, and the work of faith with power. It were certainly much better for you to be blessing God for a little faith, praying for the increase of faith, and diligently attending those means by which it may be improved and made flourishing in your souls, than by a sinful, ungrateful and prejudicial despondency, at once to dishonour God, and thus wrong your selves.

2. Doct.

2. Doct. *That the remains of unbelief in gracious hearts do cost them many tears and sorrows.*

There are many things that afflict and grieve the People of God from with-

without, but all their outward troubles are nothing to these troubles that come from within.

There are many inward troubles that make them groan, but none more than this, the unbelief they find in their own hearts. This sin justly costs them more trouble than other sins; because it is the root from which other sins do spring; a root of bitterness, bearing wormwood and gall to the imbittering of their souls. For,

First: The remains of unbelief in the Saints greatly dishonour God; and what is a great dishonour to God, cannot but be a great grief and burden to them. For look as faith gives God special honour above all other graces, so unbelief in a special manner, both wrongs and grieves him above all other sins. Unbelief in dominion makes God a liar, 1 *Joh.* 5. 10. and even the reliques thereof in Believers, doth shake their assent to his truths and promises, and nourishes a vile suspicion of them in the heart; and how do those base jealousies reflect upon his honour? Certainly it cannot but be a grief to gracious hearts to see God dishonoured by others, *Psal.* 119. 36. and a much greater

ter to dishonour him our selves, *hinc illæ lacrimæ.* Upon this ground we may justly cry out and say with tears, *Lord help our unbelief.*

Secondly: The remains of unbelief in the Saints, doth not only dishonour God, but defaces and spoils their best duties, in which they at any time approach unto God. Is the face of God clouded from us in prayer, hearing, or receiving. Examine the cause and reason, and you will find that cloud rais'd from your own unbelieving hearts. Are your affections cold, flat, and dead in duty? dig but to the root, and you will find this sin to lie there. If the word do not work upon you as you desire and pray it might, 'tis because it is not mingled with faith, *Heb.* 4. 2. No Duties, no Ordinances, no Promises can give down their sweet influences upon your souls, because of this sin. Now Communion with the Lord in duties, is the life of our life: These things are dearer to the Saints than their eyes. Justly therefore do they bewail and mourn over that sin, which obstructs and intercepts their sweetest enjoyments in this world.

Thirdly:

Thirdly: The remains of unbelief gives advantage and success to Satans temptations upon us. Doth he at any time affright and scare us from our duty, or draw and intice us to the commission of sin, or darken and cloud our condition, and fill us with inward fears and horror, without cause; all this he doth by the mediation of our own unbelief. The Apostle in *Eph.* 6. 16. calls Faith the souls Shield against temptation: And 1 *Joh.* 5.4. 'tis call'd the Victory by which we overcome, (*i.e.*) the Sword or Weapon by which we Atchieve our Victories: And if so, then unbelief disarms us both of Sword and Shield, and leaves us naked of defence in the day of Battel, a prey to the next temptation that befalls us.

Fourthly: The remains of unbelief hinder the thriving of all graces; it's a worm at their root; a plant of such a malignant quality, that nothing which is spiritual can thrive under the droppings and shaddow of it. It's said *Heb.* 4. 2. that the Gospel was Preached to the *Israelites*, but it did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it. No Ordinances nor Duties, be they never so excellent, will

will make that ſoul to thrive, where unbelief prevails: You Pray, you Hear, you Faſt, you Meditate, and yet you do not thrive, your ſpiritual food doth no good: You come from Ordinances as dead, careleſs, and vain as you went to them; and why is it thus, but becauſe of remaining unbelief?

## *Uſe* 1.

*Uſe.* 1. Let all the People of God bewail and tenderly mourn over the remainders of infidelity in your own hearts. There, there is the root of the diſeaſe; and ſurely *Reader*, thy heart is not free of ſuch ſymptoms of it, as appear in other mens hearts. For do but conſider,

1. *Sympt.* Firſt: What is our Impatiency to wait for mercy, and deſpondency of ſpirit, if deliverance come not quickly in the outward or inward ſtraights of ſoul or body, but a plain ſymptom of unbelief in our hearts. *He that believes will not make haſt*, Iſa. 28. 16. He that can believe, can alſo wait Gods time, *Pſal.* 27. 14.

2. *Sympt.* Secondly: And what doth our readineſs to uſe ſinful mediums to prevent, or extricate our ſelves out of trouble

ſpeak,

but a great deal of Infidelity lurking ſtill in our hearts; might but Faith be heard to ſpeak, it would ſay in thy heart, let me rather die ten deaths than commit one ſin. It's ſweeter and eaſier to die in any integrity, than to live with a defiled or wounded Conſcience. 'Tis nothing but our unbelief that makes us ſo ready to put forth our hands to iniquity, when the rod of the Wicked reſts long upon us, or any eminent danger threatens us, *Pſal.* 125. 3.

Thirdly: Doth not the unbelief of your hearts ſhew it ſelf in your deeper thoughtfulneſs and great anxieties about earthly things, *Matth.* 6. 30. We pretend we have truſted God with our ſouls to all Eternity, and yet cannot truſt him for our daily bread. We bring the evils of to morrow upon to day; and all becauſe we cannot believe more. 3. *Sympt.*

O Reader, how much better were it to hear ſuch queſtions as theſe from thee; how ſhall I get an heart ſuitable to the mercies I do enjoy? How ſhall I duely improve them for God? What ſhall I render to the Lord for all his goodneſs? This would better become thee, than to afflict thy ſelf with what

ſhall

ſhall I eat, what ſhall I drink, or wherewithal ſhall I be cloathed?

Fourthly: What doth the ſlaviſh fear of death ſpeak, but remains of unbelief ſtill in our hearts? Are there not many faintings, tremblings, deſponden-cies of mind under the thoughts of death? O, if faith were high, thy ſpirit could not be ſo low, 2 *Cor.* 5. 1, 2, 3. The more bondage of fear, the more infidelity.

5. *Sympt.* Fifthly: To conclude what is the voice of all thoſe diſtractions of thy heart in religious duties, but want of faith, weakneſs in faith, and the actual prevalence of unbelief? You come to God in prayer, and there a thouſand Vanities beſet you; your heart is carried away, it roves, it wanders to the ends of the earth: Conſcience ſmites for this, and ſaith, Thou doſt but mock God, thy ſoul will ſmart for this; thou feeleſt neither ſtrength nor ſweetneſs ariſing out of ſuch duties. You enquire for remedies, and fill the ears of Friends with your complaints, and it may be ſee not the root of all this to be in your own unbelief: But there it is, and till that be cured, it will not be better with you.

*Uſe*

*Use* 2.

Yet let not poor Christians so mourn as those that have no hope or ground of comfort, even in this case: For, *Use* 2.

First: Though there be remains of unbelief in you, yet you have infinite cause to bless God that they are but remains. You once were in unbelief 1 *Tim.* 1. 13. (i. e.) under the full power and dominion of it. Had God cut you off in that state, you must certainly have perished. This is the *disease*, but that was the *death* of your souls.

Secondly: Though unbelief be in you, yet it is not in you *per modum quietis*; by way of rest, as it is in all unbelievers, but by way of daily conflict, and as a burden too heavy to be borne. Now though the sin be *sad*, yet the sorrow for it is *sweet*, and your conflicts with it brings you under a very comfortable sign of grace, *Rom.* 7. 21.

Thirdly: This is a disease under which all Christians do labour more or less. There is not a heart so holy in all the world, but is in some degree tainted and infected with this disease. And this hath been evident, not only in all

all Christians of all sizes, but in all the acts of their faith. *Jobs* faith triumphed in *cap.* 13. 15. yet had its eclipse and fainting fit, in *cap.* 19. 20. *Abraham* was a most renowned Believer, a great pattern and example of faith; oh, how high a pitch did his faith mount to, in *Gen.* 22. 3. and yet there was a time when it fainted, and failed him as at *Gerar. Gen.* 20. 2, 9, 10, 11. *David* in *Psal.* 27. 1. 23. was not like *David* in 1 *Sam.* 27. 1. The faith of *Peter* shone out like the Sun in a glorious confession, *Matth.* 16. 16. and yet was not only beclouded, but seemed to be gone down and quite set in *Matth.* 26. 69. though it afterwards recovered it self.

Forthly: 'Tis not this or that degree of unbelief that damnes a man, but the power and dominion of it that damnes him. Indeed your comfort much depends upon the strength of your faith, but your salvation depends upon the truth of it. Most Christians come to Heaven with a weak and doubting faith, but few with their sails fill'd with a direct and fresh wind of assurance.

Fisthly:

Fifthly: There is enough in Christ to help thy unbelief. Lord, said this poor man, *help my unbelief.* He is an excellent *Physitian*, and knows how to relieve and cure thee: Go to him and groan out thy complaint, tell him thy heart is pained and troubled with this disease; thou shalt find him a faithful, skilful and merciful Saviour.

Sixthly: It's but a little while before this, with all other diseases bred by it in thy soul, shall be perfectly healed; Sanctification is a cure begun, Glorification is the cure performed and compleated: The former hath destroy'd the *dominion*, the latter will destroy the *existence* of it in thy soul: When you come to Heaven, and never till then will you find your selves well, and at ease in every part.

And thus much of the second point.

There are some general observations arising from both parts of my Text, considered together, *viz.* The thankful acknowledgment of his faith, and the sorrowful sense of his unbelief. It shall suffice for a conclusion to this Meditation only to note them, and they are these,

First: That the deepeſt ſenſe of ſin muſt not exclude an humble and thankful acknowledgment of the grace of God in his People. 'Tis the fault of moſt to hide their ſins, and the fault of ſome to hide their graces.

Secondly: Acceptance of our perſons and duties is a pure act of grace. There's no duty performed in a perfect act of faith; all is mixt with unbelief in ſome degree, the Honey and the Comb are mixt together, *Cant.* 2. 8. No duty as it comes from us is pure.

Thirdly: Juſtly may we ſuſpect that faith for a falſe faith, which boaſts of its own ſtrength, but never mourns in the ſenſe of unbelief. Where there are no conflicts with ſin, there can be no ſound evidence of ſincerity.

Fourthly: Believers muſt not wonder to find ſtrange viciſſitudes and alterations in the ſtate of their ſouls. Sometimes a clear, and ſometimes a cloudy day. Sometimes they have their Songs in the night, and ſometimes their bitter Lamentations. If you ask why is it thus, the anſwer is, there are twins within you, contrary

trary principles ſtruggling in your ſouls, and it is no wonder at all to find peace and trouble, hope and fear, light and darkneſs, taking their turns, and ſharing your time betwixt them.

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## THE EIGHTH
# MEDITATION
## UPON

Psal. 40. ver. 8. *I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea thy Law is within my heart.*

Casting my eye upon this precious Text, I find it perplext and darkned with variety, yea, contrariety of expositions. The *Jews* and *Socinians* generally refer all to *David*, denying Christ to be the person here spoken of. Others refer the whole *Psalm* to *Christ*, but the best expositors refer it partly to *David*, and partly to *Christ*. That this *Paragraph* in which my Text lies, refers to *Christ*, is plain from the *Apostles* allegation of it

it, in *Heb.* 10. 5, 6, 7. In this and the two former verſes there lie three great points of truth, which you may take up in this order.

First: The inſufficiency and rejection of all legal Sacrifices, as things of no vertue in themſelves to ſatisfie God, or ſave men, *ver.* 6. theſe thou *wouldeſt not*, (i. e.) thou never didſt appoint them to be the means of ſalvation farther than they ſignified and pointed at me; and now muſt vaniſh when I come in a body of fleſh, according to that, *Col.* 2. 17. 1.

Secondly: The introduction of a compleat and ſufficient means of redemption, *ver.* 7. *Loe I come.* 2.

Thirdly: The ſuitableneſs and agreeableneſs of this work of redemption to the heart and will of Jeſus Chriſt, *verſ.* 8. I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea, thy Law is within my heart; or as it is in the Hebrew, *in the midſt of my bowels.* 3.

In the words we are to note two things, *viz.* First, The riſe and ſpring of mans redemption.

Secondly: The acceptableneſs and ſuitableneſs of it to the heart of Chriſt.

1. First: The rise and first spring of mans redemption; the will and pleasure of God. So it pleased the Lord to appoint and order it, that a remnant of poor lost Sinners should be saved.

The execution and accomplishment of this good pleasure of God, was that part which by agreement and consent was committed to the Son, and is here call'd a *Law*, or command laid upon him. And answerably the death of Christ is represented as an act of obedience, *Phil.* 2. 8. and respected Gods command for it, *Joh.* 10. 18. *This Commandment have I received from my Father*, referring to the *Covenant of Redemption*, which was betwixt them from everlasting; and this was the rise and first spring of our Redemption by Christ.

2. Secondly: You have here the gratefulness and suitableness of this work to the heart of Christ. *I delight to do it, it is in my heart.* Loe, I come.

The Hebrew words note not simple consent or willingness, but the highest pleasure and complacency that can be; a work which ravishes his soul with the delights of it. *I delight to do thy will.* And that other expression, *Thy Law is with-*

*within my heart*, or bowels; hath as deep a ſenſe and ſignification, as the former. It notes the greateſt care, ſolicitude and intention of mind, in keeping the moſt precious treaſure that was committed to him, for ſo the phraſe is uſed in *Prov.* 4. 21. And ſo did our *Redeemer* eſteem and reckon this work which was by the Father demandated and committed to him. Hence the note is,

Doct.

*That the will of God to redeem Sinners by the incarnation and death of Jeſus Chriſt, was moſt grateful and pleaſing to the very heart of Chriſt.*

It is ſaid, *Prov.* 8. 31. when he was ſollacing himſelf in the ſweeteſt enjoyment of his Father, whilſt he lay in that bleſſed boſom of delights, yet the very proſpect of this work gave him pleaſure: Then were *his delights with the Sons of men.* And when he was come into the world, and had endured many abaſures and injuries, and was even now come to the moſt difficult part of the work; yet, *how am I ſtraight-*

*ned*, or pained (ſaith he) *till it be accompliſhed*, Luk. 12. 50.

Two things might call our thoughts to ſtay upon them in this point.

Firſt: The decency of it, why it ought to be ſo.

Secondly: The reaſons of it, whence it came to be ſo.

Firſt: Why it ought to be a pleaſant and grateful thing to Chriſt to take a body of fleſh, and lay it down by death again for the redemption of Sinners.

1. Firſt: It became Chriſt to go about this work with chearfulneſs and delight, that thereby he might give his death the nature and formality of a ſacrifice.

In all Sacrifices you ſhall find that God had ſtill a regard, a ſpecial reſpect to the will of the offerer. See *Exod.* 35. 5. 21. & *Levit.* 1. 3. the voluntarineſs and chearfulneſs with which it is given, is of great regard with God.

Secondly: It ought to be ſo, in regard of the unity of Chriſts will with the Fathers. The work of our redemption is call'd, *the pleaſure of the Lord*, Iſa. 53. 10. And what was the

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Fathers pleaſure, could not be diſpleaſing to him, who is one with the Father. It's impoſſible their wills can claſh, whoſe nature is one.

Thirdly: This was neceſſary to magnifie and commend the love of Jeſus Chriſt to us, for whom he gave himſelf. That he came into the world to die for us, is a mercy of the firſt magnitude, but that he came in love to our ſouls, and underwent all his ſufferings with ſuch willingneſs for our ſakes, this heightens it above all apprehenſion. O this is the moſt taking, the moſt raviſhing, the moſt aſtoniſhing conſideration of all: *He loved me, and gave himſelf for me*, Gal. 2. 20. *He loved us, and waſhed us from our ſins in his own blood*, Rev. 1. 5. Here love is in its higheſt exaltation.

Fourthly: It was neceſſary to be ſo, for the regulating of all our obedience to God according to this pattern. That ſeeing and ſetting this great example of obedience before us, we might never grutch nor grumble at any duty or ſuffering that God ſhould call us to, *You know the grace of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt; how that though he was rich, yet for your ſakes he became poor*, Saith the

Apoſtle, when he would preſs the *Corinthians* to their duty, 2 *Cor.* 8. 9. and when he would effectually urge the *Philippians* to their duty; this is the argument, *Let this mind be in you, which alſo was in Chriſt Jeſus*, Phil. 2. 5. So that it became and behooved Chriſt thus to undertake this great ſervice.

2. Secondly: Next let us conſider and examine whence it came to be ſo pleaſant and acceptable to Jeſus Chriſt to come into the world and die for poor Sinners.

And we ſhall find, that although the ſufferings of Chriſt were exceeding ſharp, and the cup of Gods wrath unſpeakably bitter; yet that which made it pleaſant and deſirable to Jeſus Chriſt, was the proſpect he had of the ſweet reſults and iſſues of his ſufferings, *Iſa.* 53. 10, 11. *He ſhall ſee of the travail of his ſoul, and ſhall be ſatisfied*, (i. e.) he ſhall have great content and pleaſure from the iſſues and fruits of his ſufferings, as *Pſal.* 128. 2. *Thou ſhalt eat the labour of thy hands*, (i. e.) the fruit of thy labours. So here, *He ſhall ſee the travail of his ſoul*, (i. e.) the fruit and effects of his travail; and to ſee this, ſhall be to him the reward and recompence

pence of all his ſufferings. Now among the ſweet reſults of the ſufferings of Chriſt, there are eſpecially theſe three which he fore-ſaw with ſingular content and delectation.

Firſt: That in his ſufferings there would be made a glorious diſplay and manifeſtation of the divine Attributes; yea, ſuch a glorious diſplay of them as never was made before to *Angels* or to *men*, nor ever ſhall be any more in this world. For though,

Firſt: The *Wiſdom* of God had made it ſelf viſible to men in the Creation of the world, yet there it ſhone but in a faint and languiſhing beam, compared with this. Here divine Wiſdom put it ſelf as it were into a viſible form, and repreſented it ſelf to the life. See 1 *Cor.* 1.24. and *Eph.* 30.10. Behold in the death of Chriſt the Wiſdom of God in its higheſt exaltation and glory. O the manifold Wiſdom of God! O the depth of his unſearchable wiſdom. Which I touched in ſome particulars before, *p.* 102.

Behold here the Wiſdom of God raiſing more glory to himſelf by occaſion of the breach of the Law, than could ever have riſen to him from the moſt

most punctual *observation* of its commands, or the most rigorous *execution* of its threatenings; from the occasion of the fall (which was our undoing) raising us to a far better estate, and with a much better security to enjoy it than that from which we fell. Yea, behold and wonder, God by the death of Christ, recovering his Elect from all the danger and mischief of sin, and yet making the way and manner of their recovery the fairest glass to represent the horror and evil of sin to them, that ever was shewn them in this world. Oh, the tryumph of divine Wisdom!

Secondly: Though the *love* of God had appeared before in our Creation, Protection, and Provision, yet nothing to what it doth in our Redemption by the death of Christ: Loe, here is the love of God in its strength and glory, *1 Joh.* 4. 10. *Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the Propitiation for our sins.* Herein is love (*i. e.*) here is the highest expression of Gods love to the Creature; not only that ever was, but that ever can be made; for in love only God acteth to the uttermost: What

ever

ever his power hath done, it can do more; but for his love it can go no higher; he hath no greater thing to give than *his Christ*. 'Tis true, in giving us a being, and that in the noblest rank and order of Creatures on Earth; herein was love. In feeding us all our life long, by his assiduous tender providence; herein is love. In protecting us under his wings from innumerable dangers and mischiefs; herein is love, much love: And yet set all this by his *Redeeming love* in Christ, and it seems nothing. When we have said all, *Herein is the love of God, that he sent his Son*, &c. This was free love to undeserving, to ill deserving Sinners. Preventing love; not that we loved him, but that he loved us. Just as an Image in the glass (saith *Ficinus*) that is imprinted there by the face looking into it, the Image does not look back upon the face, except the face look forward upon the Image; and in that the Image does seem to see the face, its nothing else, but that the face does see the Image. O, the unexpressable glory of the love of God in Christ!

Third-

Thirdly: Though God had given ſeveral ſad marks of his Juſtice before, both upon the *Angels* that fell, clapping upon them the chains of darkneſs, in the overthrow of *Sodom*, and the neighbouring *Cities*, turning them to Aſhes; as you may read in *Jud.* ver. 6, 7. yet never was the exactneſs and ſeverity of Juſtice ſo manifeſted before, nor ever ſhall be any more, as it was at the death of Chriſt. Chriſt did not only ſatisfie it fully, but he alſo honoured it highly, making that Attribute which was once a *bar*, now to be a *bottom* of our peace, *Rom.* 3.25. Never did ſuch a Perſon as Chriſt ſtand at the Bar of Juſtice before: The Blood of God was poured out to appeaſe and ſatisfie it. When Chriſt ſuffered, he did both give and take ſatisfaction; he gave it to the juſtice of God in dying; he took it in ſeeing Juſtice ſo honoured in his death.

Secondly: Another delightful proſpect Chriſt had of the fruit of his ſufferings, was the recovery and ſalvation of all the Elect by his death. And though his ſufferings were exceeding bitter, yet ſuch fruit of them as this, was exceeding ſweet. Upon this account

count he assumed his Name Jesus, *Matth.* 1. 21. yea, and his humane Nature also, *Gal.* 4. 4, 5. Souls are of great value in his eyes: One soul is of more worth in his account than all the world, *Mark* 8. 36. What a pleasure then must it be to him, to save so many souls from the everlasting wrath of the great and terrible God? Add to this

Thirdly: The glory which would redound to him from his redeemed ones to all Eternity. For it will be the everlasting pleasant imployment of the Saints in Heaven to be ascribing glory, praise, and honour to the Redeemer. *To him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own Blood, and hath made us Kings and Priests to God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever*, Rev. 1. 5, 6.

The improvement of all this will be in a word or two.

### 1. *Use for Conviction.*

This truth then in the first place, may convince, shame, and humble the very best of Christians, who find so little delight in the most easie, sweet, and 1 *Use.*

and ſpiritual duties of obedience; when Chriſt undertook and went through the moſt difficult task for them with ſuch chearfulneſs and readineſs, *Loe I come, thy Law is in my heart, I delight to do thy will.* And yet the work he ſo applied himſelf to, was a work full of difficulty, attended with reproach and ſhame, as well as anguiſh and pain.

Did Chriſt find pleaſure in abaſement and torment, in ſuffering and dying for me, and can I find no pleaſure in Praying, Hearing, Meditating, and enjoying the ſweet duties of Communion with him? Did he come ſo chearfully to Die for me, and do I go ſo dead heartedly to Prayers and Sacraments to enjoy fellowſhip with him? Was it a pleaſure to him to ſhed his Blood, and is it none to me to apply it, and reap the benefits of it? Oh Lord, what an heart have I? How unſuitable is this frame of heart to the Nature of God, whoſe eſſential excellencies make him the ſupream delight, the ſweet repoſe, ſolace, and reſt of ſouls! *Pſal. 16. 11.*

How-

How unſuitable to the principles of regeneration and holineſs purpoſely planted in the ſoul, to make ſpiritual performances a pleaſure to it!

How unſuitable to the future expected ſtate of glory, which brings the ſanctified ſoul to a ſweet complacential reſt and ſatisfaction in God! In a word, how unſuitable is this temper of ſpirit to the heart of Jeſus Chriſt! O, me thinks I hear Chriſt thus expoſtulating with me this day.

Is this thy zeal and thy delight in the duties of obedience? Is it rather the awe of Conſcience than the pleaſure of Communion that brings thee to this duty? Doth thy heart need ſo many arguments to perſwade it even to the ſweeteſt, eaſieſt, and moſt pleaſant duties in Religion? Well, I did not love thee at that rate; my heart readily eccho'd to the Fathers call to die for thee, to drink the very dregs of the cup of trembling for thee. I come, I come. I delight to do thy will, thy Law is in the midſt of my bowels.

### 2. *Use for Exhortation.*

2. *Use.* If it be so, how great a motive have the People of God before them, to make them apply themselves with all chearfulness and readiness of mind to all the duties of active and passive obedience? O let there be no more grumblings, lazy excuses, shiftings off duty, or dead-hearted and listless performances of them after such an example as this. Be ready to do the will of God; yea, be you also ready to suffer it. Let the same mind be in you, which also was in Christ Jesus. The more pleasure and delight you find in doing or suffering the will of God, the more of Christs spirit is in you, and the more of his Image is upon you. Are not all holy duties expressed in Scripture by the Saints walking with God, *Gen.* 17 1. and is not this an Angelical life? Can it be a burden to the ear to hear sweet ravishing strains of melody; or to the eye, to behold variety of pleasant and lively colours; or to the palate to relish the delicious sweetness of meats and drinks.

Oh

Oh Reader, were thy heart more ſpiritual, more deeply ſanctified, and Heavenly, it would be no more pain to thee to Pray, Hear, or Meditate on the things of God, than it is to a Bird to carry and uſe his own wings; or to a Man, to eat the moſt pleaſant food when he is an hungry. *I have rejoyced (ſaith David) in the way of thy Commandements, as much as in all riches*, Pſal. 119. 14.

And as to ſufferings for Chriſt, they ſhould not be grievous to Chriſtians, that know how chearfully Chriſt came from the boſom of the Father to die for them. What have we to leave, or loſe, in compariſon with him? What are our ſufferings to Chriſts? Alas, there is no compare; there was more bitterneſs in one drop of his ſufferings, than in a ſea of ours.

To conclude, your delight and readineſs in the paths of obedience, is the very meaſure of your ſanctification.

THE

## THE NINETH
# MEDITATION
## UPON

Zech. 22. *part of* ver. 10. *And they ſhall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they ſhall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only Son, and ſhall be in bitterneſs for him, as one that is in bitterneſs for his firſt-born.*

THIS promiſe is confeſſed to have a ſpecial reſpect to the *Jews* Converſion to *Chriſt*. It was in part accompliſhed in the *Apoſtles* days, *Acts* 2.37. yet that was but a *ſpecimen* or handſel of what ſhall be,

be, when the body of that Nation ſhall be called.

But yet it cannot be denied that all Chriſtians find the ſame pierceing ſorrows, and wounding ſenſe of ſin, when God awakens them by convictions, and brings them to ſee the evil of ſin, and the grace of Chriſt, that is here expreſt concerning them at their converſion.

The words preſent us with three very remarkable particulars in Evangelical repentance, *viz.*

Firſt: The ſpring and principle of it.

Secondly: The effects and fruits of it.

Thirdly: The depth and meaſure of it.

Firſt: The ſpring and principle of Repentance expreſt in theſe words, *They ſhall look upon me whom they have pierced.* This looking upon Chriſt, is an act of faith, for ſo it is deſcribed in Scripture, *Joh.* 6. 40. *Iſa.* 45. 22. and it reſpects Chriſt crucified as its proper object; yea, and that by them, not only as their Progenitors involved them in that guilt, by entailing it on them, but as their own ſins were the meri- 1.

meritorious cauſe of his death and ſufferings. *They ſhall look upon me whom they have pierced.*

2. Secondly: The effects and fruits of ſuch an aſpect of faith upon Chriſt is here alſo noted. *They ſhall mourn and be in bitterneſs,* (i. e.) it ſhall melt and thaw them into Godly ſorrow; it ſhall break their hard and ſtony hearts to pieces: The eye of faith ſhall affect their hearts; for indeed Evangelical ſorrows, are hearty and undiſſembled, tears dropping out of the eye of faith.

3. Thirdly and laſtly: The depth and meaſure of their ſorrow is here likewiſe noted. And it is compared with the greateſt and moſt piercing ſorrows men are acquainted with in this world, even the ſorrow of a tender-hearted Father mourning over a dead Son, yea, an only Son, and his firſt born, than which no earthly ſorrow is more penetrating and ſharp, *Jer. 6. 26.*

Hence the Note will be,

Doct.

Doct. *That the ſufferings of Chriſt are exceeding prwerful, to melt Believers hearts into Godly ſorrow.* His

The eye of faith is a precious eye, and according to its various Aſpects upon Chriſt, it produceth various effects upon the hearts of men. Eying Chriſt as our compleat *Righteouſneſs*, ſo it pacifies and quiets the heart; eying him as our pattern, ſo it directs and regulates our actions; eying him as our ſacrifice, offer'd up to divine Juſtice for our ſins, ſo it powerfully thaws the heart, and melts the affections.

By meltings, I do not only underſtand tears, as if they only were expreſſive of all ſpiritual ſorrow; for it is poſſible the waters of ſorrow may run deep in the heart, when the eye cannot yield a drop.

There be two things in Repentance, *Trouble* and *Tears*. The firſt is *Eſſential*, the laſt *Contingent*. The firſt flows from the influence of faith upon the ſoul; the laſt much depends upon the temper and conſtitution of the body. It is a mercy when our tears can flow from an heart fill'd with ſorrow for ſin, and love to Chriſt; and yet it often falls out that there is an heavy heart, where the eyes are dry. But that there is efficacy in faith to melt the heart

heart, by looking upon the ſufferings of Chriſt for ſin, is undoubted; and how it becomes ſo powerful an inſtrument to this end, I will ſhew you in the following particulars.

1. Firſt: Faith eyes the dignity of the Perſon of Chriſt, who was pierced for us; how excellent and glorious a Perſon he is. In the Captivity, it was for a lamentation that *Princes were hanged up by the hands, and the faces of Elders were not reverenced*, Lam. 5. 12. We read alſo the Lamentation of *David*, 2 Sam. 3. 38. as he followed *Abners* Herſe. *A Prince and a great man is fallen in* Iſrael *to day.*

But what was *Abner*, and what were the *Princes* of *Iſrael* to the Son of God? Loe here by faith the Believer ſees the Prince of the Kings of the Earth, the only begotten of the Father, equal to God in nature and dignity, he whom all the *Angels* worſhip, hanging dead upon the curſed Tree. Faith ſees Royal Blood, the Blood of God poured out by the Sword of Juſtice for ſatisfaction and reconciliation; and this cannot but deeply affect the believing ſoul.

Secondly:

Secondly: Faith repreſents the ſeverity of Divine Juſtice to Jeſus Chriſt, and the extremity of his ſufferings; and this ſight is a melting ſight.

The Apoſtle tells us, *Gal.* 3. 13. he was made Κατάρα, *a Curſe*, and Execration for us: It relates to the kind and manner of his death upon the Croſs, which was the death of a *Slave*, *ſervile ſupplicium*; a free man was priviledg'd from that puniſhment. It looks upon, and well conſiders the ſad plight and condition Chriſt was in, in the days of his Humiliation for us. It's ſaid of him, *Matth.* 26. 38. he was Περίλυπος, *undequaque triſtis*, ſurrounded with griefs, exactly anſwerable to his name, *Iſa.* 53. 3. *a man of ſorrows.* Let him look which way he would, outward or inward, upward or downward, to Friends or Enemies, he could behold nothing but ſorrow, and what might increaſe his miſery. Another *Evangeliſt* ſaith he was *ſore amazed*, Mark. 14. 33. Ἐκθαμβεῖσθαι — It notes ſuch a conſternation as makes the hair of the head ſtand upright, *horripilatio.* A third tells us his *ſoul was troubled*, Joh. 12. 27. ἡ ψυχή μου τετάρακται, *Unde Tartarus*, a word from whence Hell is de-

rived, and denoting the anguiſh and troubles of them that are in that place of torments.

And the fourth tells us he was in an *Agony*, Luk. 24. 44. all expreſſing in ſeveral emphatical notions and metaphors, the extremity of Chriſts anguiſh and torment. This cannot but greatly affect and break the Believers heart.

Thirdly: But then, that which moſt affects the heart, is Chriſts Undergoing all this, not only in *love* to us, but in our *room* and ſtead. He ſuffered not for any evil he had done, for there was no guile found in his mouth, *Iſa.* 53. 4, 5. but the Juſt ſuffered for the Unjuſt, 1 *Pet.* 3. 18. It was for me, a vile wretched worthleſs Sinner. It was my Pride, my Earthlineſs, the hardneſs of my heart, the corruption of my nature, the innumerable evils of my life, that brought him down to the duſt of death. *He was made ſin for us, who knew no ſin*, 2 Cor. 5. 21.

Who can believingly eye Chriſt, as ſuffering ſuch pains, ſuch wrath, ſuch a curſe in the room of ſuch a Sinner, ſuch a Rebel; ſo undeſerving, and ſo ill-deſerving a Creature, and not mourn as for an only Son, and be in

in bitterneſs as for a firſt-born?

Fourthly: Faith melts the heart by conſidering the effects and fruits of the ſufferings of Chriſt, what great things he hath purchaſed by his Stripes and Blood for poor Sinners; a full and final *pardon* of ſin, a well-ſettled *peace* with God, a ſure *title* and right to the eternal Inheritance; and all this for thee, a Law-condemned, a Self-condemned Sinner. Lord, what am I, that ſuch mercies as theſe ſhould be purchaſed by ſuch a price for me; for me, when thouſands and ten thouſands of ſweeter diſpoſitions muſt burn in Hell for ever! Oh, what manner of love is this!

Fifthly: Faith melts the heart by exerting a three-fold act upon Chriſt Crucified.

Firſt: *A realizing act*, repreſenting all this in the greateſt certainty and evidence that can be. Theſe are no *deviſed fables*, but the ſure and infallible reports of the Goſpel.

Secondly: An *appying act*; he loved me, and gave himſelf for me, *Gal.* 2. 20. He loved us, and waſhed us from our ſins in his own Blood, *Rev.* 1. 5.

applying

Thirdly and laſtly: By an *inferring or reaſoning act.* If Chriſt died for me, then I ſhall never die: If his Blood were paid down for me, then my ſins which are many, are forgiven me. If he was Condemned in my room, I am acquitted, and ſhall be ſaved from wrath to come, through him. O how weighty do theſe thoughts prove to believing ſouls.

1. *Uſe for information.*

1. *Uſe.* 1. *Then ſure there is but little faith, becauſe there is ſo much deadneſs and unaffectedneſs among Profeſſors.* A believing ſight of Chriſt will work upon a gracious heart, as a dead Son, a beloved and only Son, uſes to do upon a tender Fathers heart.

Reader, was it ever thy ſad lot to look upon ſuch an heart-rending object? Did'ſt thou ever feel the pangs and commotions in thy bowels, that ſome have felt upon ſuch a ſight? Why ſo will thy heart work towards Chriſt; if ever thou believingly lookeſt on him whom thou haſt pierced.

2. *Infer.*

2. *Infer.*

*Then the acting and exerciſing of faith is the beſt expedient to get a tender heart, and raiſe the dead affections.* We are generally full of complaints, how hard, how dead and ſtupid our hearts are; we are often putting ſuch caſes as theſe, How ſhall I get a broken heart for ſin? How ſhall I raiſe my dead heart in duty? Why this is the way; no expedient in all the world like this. Look upon him whom thou haſt pierced. 'Tis the melting Argument.

2. *Uſe of Examination.*

But that which I eſpecially aim at in this point, is for the tryal and examination of thy heart, Reader, in the point of true *Evangelical Repentance*, which is thy proper buſineſs at this time: And I will go no further than the Text for rules to examine and try it by. 2. *Uſe.*

1. *Rule.*

All Evangelical Repentance hath a ſupernatural ſpring, *I will pour out the* 1. *Rule.*

*ſpirit of grace*, and they ſhall mourn. Till the ſpirit be poured out upon us, it is as eaſie to preſs water out of a Rock, as to make our hearts relent and mourn. There are indeed natural meltings the effects of an ingenuous Temper, but theſe differ, in kind and nature, from Godly ſorrow.

2. *Rule.*

2. *Rule.* Godly ſorrows are real, ſincere, and undiſſembled. They ſhall mourn *as for an only Son.* Parents need not the help of an *Onion* to draw tears on ſuch accounts: O! their very hearts are pierced; they could even die with them. Sighs, groans, and tears are not hang'd out as falſe ſigns of what is not to be found in their hearts.

3. *Rule.*

3. *Rule.* Evangelical ſorrow is very deep; ſo much the mourning for an only Son, a firſt-born, muſt import. Theſe waters, how ſtill ſoever they be, run deep, very deep, in the bottom channel of the ſoul. See *Act.* 2. 27. *They were cut to the heart.*

4. *Rule.*

4. *Rule.*

Faith is the inſtrument employed in breaking the heart. *They ſhall look and mourn.* This is the Burning glaſs that contracts the beams, and fires the affections. 4. *Rule.*

5. *Rule.*

Laſtly: The Wrong ſin hath done to God, and the ſufferings it hath brought Chriſt under, are the piercing and heart-wounding conſiderations. They ſhall look upon me whom they have pierced, and mourn. The piercing of Chriſt by our ſin, is that muſt pierce thy ſoul with ſorrow. 5. *Rule.*

## THE TENTH
# MEDITATION
## UPON

John 6. *ver.* 55. *For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed.*

N this context our Lord Jesus Christ makes a most spiritual and excellent discourse to the Jews, about the nature and necessity of faith in him, taking the occasion thereof from the Bread, which a little before he had so miraculously multiplied, and fed them with, raising up their minds to more sublime and spiritual things, and letting them know that Bread, how sweet soever it was, was but a shaddow of himself, infinitely

finitely more ſweet and neceſſary.

Theſe words are a *propoſition*, in which are theſe three things obſervable.

Firſt: The *ſubject*, my Fleſh and my Blood.

Secondly: The *Predicate*, it is Meat and Drink.

Thirdly: *The manner of Predication*, it's *Meat indeed*, and *Drink indeed*.

Firſt: The *ſubject*, my *Fleſh*, and my *Blood*, (i. e.) my Humanity; this is meat and drink, true ſpiritual food. If it be demanded why he had not ſaid, I am meat and drink indeed; but rather chuſes to ſay, my fleſh and blood is ſo; the reaſon is evident, ſaith Learned *Camero*, becauſe if you take away Fleſh and Blood from Chriſt, he cannot be Food or Life to us. For in order to his being ſo, he muſt ſatisfie God for us, and obtain the Remiſſion of our ſins; but without ſhedding of Blood there is no Remiſſion. Now for as much as by the offering up of his Body, and ſhedding of his Blood, he hath obtained pardon and life for us; therefore his Fleſh and Blood is call'd our Meat and our Drink, that by which our ſouls live. Which brings us to the ſecond thing.

Secondly: The *Predicate*, it is meat and drink, (*i. e.*) it is to our souls of the same Use and necessity that meat and drink is to our natural life, which cannot be sustained or continued without them.

The life of our souls as necessarily depends upon the Flesh and Blood of Christ, as our natural life doth upon meat and drink. Yet beware of a mistake here; the Flesh and Blood, or the Humanity of Christ is not the *Fountain* of our spiritual life, but the *Channel* rather, through which it flows to us from his *Divinity*. By reason of his Incarnation and Death, Righteousness and Life comes to us.

Thirdly: The manner of *Predication* is very *Emphatical*, it is meat *indeed*, and drink *indeed*; which notes two things.

First: *Reality*, in opposition to all legal shaddows and types.

Secondly: *Transcendent excellency*, far surpassing all other food, even *Manna* it self, which for its excelleney is styled *Angels food*. My Flesh is meat indeed (*i. e.*) true, substantial, and real food to souls, and choice excellent and incomparable food.

Hence observe. Doct.

## Doct.

*That what meat and drink is to our bodies, that, and much more than that, the Flesh and Blood of Christ is to believing souls.*

Two things require explication in this point.

First; Wherein the resemblance or agreement lies betwixt the Flesh and Blood of Christ, and Meat and Drink.

Secondly: Wherein the former transcends and excels the latter.

### 1. Query.

1. Query. Wherein lies the resemblance and agreement betwixt the Flesh and Blood of Christ, and material Meat and Drink?

*Sol.*

The agreement is manifest in the following particulars.

First: Meat and Drink is necessary to support Natural life, we cannot live without it. Upon this account Bread is call'd the *Staff* and *Stay*, (i. e.) the support of the natural spirits which do

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as much lean and depend upon it, as a feeble man doth upon his ſtaff, *Iſa.* 3. 1. But yet how neceſſary ſoever it be, the Fleſh and Blood of Chriſt is more indiſpenſibly neceſſary for the life of our ſouls, *Joh.* 6. 53. *Except ye eat the Fleſh of the Son of man, and drink his Blood, ye have no life in you.* Our ſouls have more abſolude need of peace and pardon by Chriſt, than our bodies have of meat and drink. Better our bodies were ſtarved and famiſhed, than our ſouls damned and loſt for ever.

Secondly: Meat and Drink are ever moſt ſweet and deſirable to thoſe that are hungry and thirſty. It is hunger and thirſt that gives value and eſtimation to meat and drink, *Prov.* 27. 7. *To the hungry ſoul every bitter thing is ſweet*; and ſo it is in our eſteem of Chriſt, *Joh.* 7. 37. *If any man thirſt, let him come to me and drink.* When God by illumination and conviction makes men deeply ſenſible of their miſerable loſt and periſhing condition, then ten thouſand worlds for a Chriſt. All is but dung and droſs in compariſon of the excellency of Chriſt Jeſus.

Thirdly: Meat and drink muſt undergoe an *alteration*, and loſe its own

*form*

*form* before it actually nouriſhes the body. The Corn is ground to pieces in the Mill, before it be made Bread to nouriſh us. And Chriſt muſt be ground betwixt the upper and neither Millſtones of the wrath of God, and malice of men, to be made Bread for our ſouls. The Prophet ſaith, *Iſa.* 52. 14. *His Viſage was marr'd more than any mans.* He did not look like himſelf, the beauty and glory of Heaven, but the reproach of Men, and deſpiſed of the People. Oh what an alteration did his Incarnation and Sufferings make upon him, *Phil.* 2. 6, 7. *Quantum mutatus ab illo?*

Fourthly: Natural food muſt be received into our bodies, and have a *natural Union* with them; and Chriſt muſt be received into our ſouls, and have a *ſpiritual Union* with them by faith, or elſe we can have no nouriſhment or benefit by him. An empty Profeſſion, a meer talkative Religion nouriſhes the inner man juſt as much as the ſight of meat, and our commending of it, doth our outward man. It's Chriſt's dwelling in our hearts by faith, *Eph.* 3. 17. our receiving of him, *Joh.* 1. 12. our eating his Fleſh and drinking

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ing his Blood, *Joh.* 6. 53. (i.e.) the effectual application of Christ to our ſouls by faith, that makes us partakers of his benefits.

Fifthly: Meat and drink muſt be taken every day, or elſe natural life will languiſh, and ſpiritual life will never be comfortably maintain'd in us without daily communion with Jeſus Chriſt: If a gracious ſoul neglect or be interrupted in its courſe of duties, and ſtated times of prayer, it will be quickly diſcernable by the Chriſtian himſelf in the deadneſs of his own heart, and by others alſo, in the barrenneſs of his diſcourſes. And in theſe things ſtands the Analogy and agreement of the Fleſh and Blood of Chriſt with meat and drink.

2. *Query.*

2. *Query.* The next thing is to open the tranſcendent excellency of Chriſts Fleſh and Blood, above all other food in the world; and this appears in four particulars:

Firſt: This Fleſh and Blood was aſſumed into the neareſt Union with the ſecond Perſon in the bleſſed *Trinity*, and

and ſo is not only dignified above all other created Beings, but becomes the *firſt receptacle* of all grace intended to be communicated through it to the Children of men, *Joh.* 1. 14.

Secondly: This Fleſh and Blood of Chriſt was offered up to God as the great Sacrifice for our ſins, and Purchaſe of our peace, *Col.* 1. 20. *Eph.* 5. 2. and ſo it is of ineſtimable price and value to Believers. The humane Nature of Chriſt was the *Sacrifice*, the divine Nature was the *Altar* on which it was offered up, and by which it was dignified and ſanctified, and made an Offering of a ſweet ſmelling ſavour to God, *Eph.* 5. 2.

Thirdly: This Fleſh and Blood of Chriſt is the great *medium* of conveyance of all bleſſings and mercies to the ſouls and bodies of Believers. It lies as a vaſt pipe at the Fountain-head of bleſſings, receiving and conveying them from God to Men, *Col.* 1. 14. 19.

So then, it being united to the ſecond Perſon, and ſo become the Fleſh and Blood of God, it being the Sacrifice offered up to God for Attonement and Remiſſion of ſins, and the *medium* of conveying all grace and mercy from God,

God the Fountain to the ſouls and bodies of Believers; how ſweet a relliſh muſt it have upon the pallate of faith? Here faith may taſt the ſweetneſs of a *Pardon*, a full, free, and final pardon of ſin, than which nothing in this world can be ſweeter to a Sin-burdened Conſcience.

Here it taſts the incomparable ſweetneſs of *Peace* with God, a Peace which paſſeth Underſtanding; the breach Sin made, is by this Sacrifice made up for ever, *Col.* 1. 20.

Here it taſts the unexpreſſible ſweetneſs of *acceptation* with God, and an intereſt in his favour; a mercy which a poor convinced ſoul would give ten thouſand worlds for, were it to be purchaſed. Yea, here it relliſheth all the ſweet *Promiſes* in the Covenant of grace, as confirmed and ratified by this Sacrifice, *Heb.* 9. 5. So that well might he ſay, my Fleſh is meat indeed, and my Blood is drink indeed, the moſt excellent New Teſtament-food for Believers.

1. *Uſe of Information.*

1. *Uſe.* First: See here the love of a Saviour, that Heavenly *Pellican*, who feeds us with

with his own Fleſh and Blood. You read *Lam.* 4. 10. of pitiful Women who eat the fleſh of their own Children; but where have you read of Men or Women that gave their own fleſh and blood for meat and drink to their Children? Think on this you that are ſo loth to croſs and deny your fleſh for Chriſt; he ſuffered his Fleſh to be rent, and his Blood ſet abroach for you; what love like the love of Chriſt?

Secondly: Learn hence a ground of Content in the loweſt and pooreſt condition allotted to any Believer in this world. It may be ſome of you live low in the world, you have hard fare, and are abridg'd of many of thoſe ſweet comforts in the Creature, which the Enemies of God abound in; but ſtill remember, you have no cauſe to envy their dainties, and be diſſatisficd with your own lot and portion, when not many *Nobles* or mighty in the world feed as your ſouls do feed. O what a feaſt have you! What dainties do your ſouls taſt by faith! Whilſt others do but feed upon Aſhes and Huſks, what is the fleſh of *Lambs and Calves out of the Stall*, to the Fleſh of Chriſt? What is Amos 6. 4, 5, 6.

Wine

Wine in bowls, and the *chief Oyntment* to the Blood of Chriſt, and the anoyntings of his Spirit? O be ſatisfied with your outward lot, however God hath caſt it, whilſt he hath dealt ſo bountifully with your ſouls.

Thirdly: Learn hence the neceſſity of faith, in order to the livelihood and ſubſiſtance of our ſouls. What is a Feaſt to him that cannot taſt it? And what is Chriſt to him that cannot believe? That cannot by faith eat his Fleſh and drink his Blood?

'Tis not the *Preparation* made for ſouls in Chriſt, but the *Application* of him by faith, that gives us the ſweetneſs and benefit of him. Faith is the ſouls mouth or pallate; the Unbeliever taſts no ſweetneſs in Chriſt, he can reliſh more ſweetneſs in money, meat, drink, carnal mirth, or any ſenſual enjoyment than Chriſt.

Fourthly: How excellent are Goſpel-Ordinances? What ſweetneſs is there to be found in them by true Believers? For there Chriſt is prepar'd, and as it were ſerv'd in for them to feed upon. It is your Miniſters work to cook and prepare for you all the week long, and to furniſh for you a feaſt

feast of fat things. Loe, here's a Table spread and furnish'd this day with the costliest dainties that Heaven affords. O prize these mercies, sit not here with flat or wanton appetites, lest God call to your Enemies, and bid them take away.

### 2. *Use of Exhortation.*

Is the Flesh and Blood of Christ Meat and Drink indeed, then let me exhort you Brethren. 2. *Use.*

First: To come to this Table with sharp and hungry appetites. Have you ever tasted that the Lord is gracious, and do you not hunger and thirst to taste it again. Surely *where the Carcass is, thither will the Eagles be gather'd*, Math. 24. 28. There is a two fold appetite, a *dainty*, and an *hungry* appetite; beware of a nice and dainty appetite, that can relish nothing in the most solid and spiritual duties, except the dish be garnisht with flowers of Rhetorick, or the matter serv'd in with art and elegancy: This hath been the great sin of the Professors of this Generation. O Christians, no more of that I pray you. Were you really an hungred and athirst

thirſt for Chriſt, you would come to his Ordinances, as famiſhing men to a feaſt.

Secondly: To feed heartily upon Chriſt in every Ordinance, and in every Sacrament eſpecially. O that your ſouls might hear and anſwer that invitation this day, *Cant.* 5. 1. *Eat, O Friends, drink, yea, drink abundantly, O Beloved.*

For Motives I will only hint theſe three following:

Firſt: *Chriſt is the matter of this Feaſt.* God hath prepar'd him for your ſouls. Is any thing in Heaven or Earth ſo ſweet as Chriſt Sacrificed is? Do not the *Angels* and Saints in Heaven feaſt upon him? Surely one drop of Chriſt's Blood hath more ſweetneſs and excellency in it, than the whole Ocean of all Creature-comforts.

Secondly: *Don't your graces need it?* Have you not a languiſhing love, a ſtaggering faith, dull and ſluggiſh deſires? Look into your hearts, and ſee what need there is of ſtrengthening the things that are in you, which are ready to die. O feed upon Chriſt, that your graces may be revived & ſtrengthened.

Thirdly: *Do you know how many daies you are to go in the ſtrength of this meal?* How long it may be ere you ſit again at the

the Lords Table? Surely even these as well as your inferior temporal comforts stand upon terms of greatest uncertainty. Ah Christians! Consider well the times you live in, the Enemy that stands ready to take away the cloth, and remove your spiritual food from you. It's said of *Peter Martyr*, that being in *Oxford* when Q. *Mary* came in, and hearing the first *Mass-bell* ring, he was struck to the heart, and said, *hæc una notula omnem meam doctrinam evertit.* This one tinkling Bell overthrows all the labours of my Ministry at once.

God grant we may hear none of that Musick in *England* any more; but it's like to be according to your estimation and improvement of Christ's precious Ordinances.

Thirdly: *Commend the experienced sweetness of Christ to others.* Don't conceal his loveliness and excellency. Thus the fair and enamoured Spouse charges or adjures others, *Cant.* 5. 9. Be not content to feast upon Christ alone, whilst others souls are starving, and perhaps the souls of your dear natural Relations. Say to them as *David*, Psal. 34. 8. *O, taste and see how good the Lord is.*

Fourthly

Fourthly and laſtly: *See that your appetite to Chriſt be right, and truly ſpiritual.* Such an hunger and thirſt, upon which bleſſedneſs is entail'd by promiſe; and you may conclude it ſo, when

Firſt: It is a *ſharp* and ſtrong appetite, *Pſal.* 42. 1. Let your thoughts run upon Chriſt night and day, like the deſires of a longing Woman.

Secondly: When 'tis a *Univerſal* appetite, after every thing in Chriſt, his Holineſs as well as his Righteouſneſs, his Commands as well as his Promiſes, for he is *altogether lovely*, Cant. 5. 16.

Thirdly: When 'tis a *continual appetite*; I mean not that the pulſe of your deſires ſhould keep an even ſtroke at all times, but that there be real and ſincere workings of heart after him always, *Pſal.* 119. 20.

Fourthly: When 'tis an *induſtrious appetite*, awakening the ſoul to the Uſe of all means and practice of all duties in order to ſatisfaction, *Pſal.* 27. 4. *One thing have I deſired of the Lord, and that will I ſeek after.*

Fifthly and laſtly: It's then aright, when 'tis an *inſatiable appetite*, never to be allaid with any thing beſides Chriſt,

*Pſal.*

*Pſal.* 73.25. No, nor with Chriſt himſelf, till thou comeſt to the full enjoyment of him in Heaven. The Believer knows, how ſweet ſoever his Communion with Chriſt is in this world, yet that Communion he ſhall have with Chriſt in Heaven far excels it; there it will be more intimate and immediate, 1 *Cor.* 19. 12. more full and perfect, even to ſatisfaction, *Pſal.* 17.15. more conſtant and continued, not ſuffering ſuch interruptions as it doth here; *Rev.* 21.25. More pure and unmixed. Here our Corruptions work with our graces, *Rom.* 7.21. but there grace ſhall work alone. In a word, more durable and perpetual: We ſhall be ever with the Lord, 1 *Theſ.* 4.7. Long therefore to drink that new Wine in the Fathers Kingdom. The Spirit and the Bride ſay came; and let him that heareth, ſay come, even ſo come Lord Jeſus, come quickly.

THE

## THE ELEVENTH MEDITATION UPON

Cant. 8. *v.* 6. *Set me as a Seal upon thy heart, as a Seal upon thine arm; for love is ſtrong as death, jealouſie is cruel as the grave; the coals thereof are coals of fire, which hath a moſt vehement flame.*

THIS Book is a ſacred *Allegory*, the ſenſe thereof is deep and ſpiritual. Our unacquaintedneſs with ſuch Schemes and figures of ſpeech, together with the want of ſpiritual light and experience, makes it difficult to be underſtood;

ſtood; but the *Allegory* being once unfolded by reaſon of its affinity with the fancy truth is more eaſily and affectingly tranſmitted both to the mind and heart.

St. *Auguſtine* aſſignes this reaſon why we are ſo much delighted with *Metaphors* and *Allegories*, becauſe they are ſo much proportioned to our ſences, with which our reaſon hath contracted an intimacy and familiarity. And therefore God to accommodate his truth to our capacity, doth as it were embody it in earthly expreſſions, according to that of the ancient *Caballiſts*, *lumen ſupremum nunquam deſcendit ſine in dumente*. Heavenly truth never diſcendeth to us without its vail and covering.

The words before us are the requeſt of the Spouſe to Jeſus Chriſt, and conſiſt of two parts, *viz.*

1. Her Suit, which is earneſt.
2. Her Argument, which is weighty.

Her earneſt ſuite or requeſt to Jeſus Chriſt, *Set me as a Seal upon thy heart, as a Seal upon thine arm.* The *heart* of Chriſt notes his moſt dear, inward, and tender affection; his *Arm* notes his pro- 1.

protecting and preserving care and power: The last naturally follows the first; what men dearly affect, they tenderly and carefully protect. And by *setting her as a Seal upon his heart and arm*, she means a sure and a well-confirmed interest, both in his love and power; This she would have firmly sealed and ratified; and that this is her meaning, will plainly appear from

2. The Argument with which she enforces her request *For love is strong as death, jealousie is cruel as the grave*, &c. By *Jealousie*, we must understand her fears and suspicions of coming short of Christ and his love, q. d. What if after all, I should be deceived? What if Jesus Christ do not love me with a special love. O these fears and suspicions are intolerable torments to her, she cannot bear them; they are cruel as the grave, insufferable as coales of fire, which have a most vehement flame. q. d. Lord, if thou leave me in the midst of these jealousies of thy love, I shall be but a torment to my self: I shall live as one upon the rack, or in the flames. Hence the note is.

Doct.

## Doct.

*That there is nothing in this world which true Christians more earnestly desire, than to be well assured and satisfied of the love of Jesus Christ to their souls.*

In the meditation of this point, two things must be inquired into.

1. Why this assurance is so desirable.
2. How it may be obtained.

Why the assurance of the love of Christ is so desirable in the eyes of true Christians. And among others, there are two things that especially make it so, *viz.* 1.

1. The sweetness of its enjoyment.
2. The difficulty of its attainment.

The sweetness of its enjoyment, which is unexpressable and inconceivable; for it is a mercy above all estimation. 1.

It is
1. The riches of faith.
2. The reſt and eaſe of the heart.
3. The pleaſure of life.
4. A Cordial in death.
5. A ſweet ſupport in all troubles.

1. It is the very *riches of faith*, the moſt pleaſant fruit which grows upon the top branches of faith. The Scripture tells us of an aſſurance of Underſtanding, hope, and faith: All theſe graces are precious in themſelves, but the aſſurance of each of them is the moſt ſweet and pleaſant part. Knowledge above knowledge is the full aſſurance of knowledge: Hope above hope, is the full aſſurance of hope; and faith above faith, is the full aſſurance of faith. The leaſt and loweſt act of ſaving faith is precious, & above all value; what then muſt the higheſt and moſt excellent acts of faith be? Certainly, there is a ſweetneſs in the aſſurance of faith, that few men have the privilege to taſte; and they that do, can find no words able to expreſs it to anothers Underſtanding. The weakeſt Chriſtian is exalted above other men, but the aſſured Chriſtian hath

hath a preference before all other Christians.

2. It is *hearts ease*, the very Sabbath and sweet repose of the soul. Thousands of poor Christians would part with all they possess in this world, to enjoy it, but it flies from them. The life that most of them live, is a life betwixt hopes and fears; their interest in Christ is very doubtful to them. Sometimes they are encouraged from sensible workings of grace, then all is dashed again, by the contrary stirrings and workings of their own corruptions. Now the Sun shines out clear, by and by the Heavens are over-cast and clouded again: But the assured Christian is at rest from those tormenting fears and jealousies, which my Text speaks of, that are as cruel as the grave, and as insufferable as coals of fire in a mans bosom. He can take Christ into the arms of his faith, and say, *My Beloved is mine, and I am his.* Return to thy rest, O my soul, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee.

3. It is the *pleasure of life*; yea, the most rational, pure, and transporting pleasure. What is life without pleasure? And what pleasure is there in the world comparable to this pleasure? For let

the ſealed and aſſured Believer *conſider*, and compare, and he muſt needs find a joy and pleaſure beyond the joy of the whole Earth. If he conſider well what he is aſſured of, it is no common mercy, but Chriſt himſelf, and his love; a mercy incomprehenſible by Men or Angels, *Eph.* 3. 19. Put Chriſt into the ſenſible poſſeſſion of a Believer, and joy is no more under his command for that time; he can no more refuſe to rejoyce, than he that is tickled can forbear to laugh; and eſpecially when his thoughts are exerciſed in *comparing* ſtates and conditions, either his own with other mens, or his own now with what it was, and what it ſhall be. To think with thy ſelf thus, I am aſſured of Chriſt and his love, my intereſt in him is ſealed; but this is a mercy few enjoy beſides me. There be millions of ſouls of equal value with mine by nature, that ſhall never enjoy ſuch a mercy as this. Yea, the time was when I my ſelf was far from it, in my unregenerate eſtate. Lord, how is it I had not then been ſealed to Damnation? O, 'tis well with me for preſent, that I can call Chriſt my own; and yet it will be better and better. My condition will mend every day. I am

now

now *in Christ*, and it is but a little while before I shall be *with Christ*, and arrive at the full satisfaction of my very heart. O, what pleasure doth every glance backward or forward give to the sealed soul!

4. It is a *Cordial in death*, and there is none like it. This will make the soul triumph over the grave, take death chearfully by the cold hand, welcome its grim Messengers, and long to be gone, and be with Christ. Dark and doubting Christians may indeed shrink back from it, and be affraid of the exchange; but the assured soul longs to be gone, and needs patience to live, as other men do to die. When one was asked if he were willing to die, his answer was, *Illius est nolle mori, qui nolit ire ad Christum.* Let him be loth to die, that is loath to go to Christ. The sugar of assurance sweetens the bitter cup of death, and makes it delectable to a Believers relish.

5. In a word, it is *a sweet support in all the troubles* and afflictions on this side the grave. Let the assured soul be cast into what condition the Lord pleases, be it upon a bed of sickness; yet this gives his soul such support and

comfort, that he ſhall not ſay, I am ſick, ſin being forgiven; the ſoul is well, when the body is in pain, *Iſa.* 33. 24. Let him be caſt into a *Priſon*, here's that will turn a Priſon into a Paradiſe, *Act.* 5.41. Let him be pincht with any outward want, this will ſupply all, *As having nothing, and yet poſſeſſing all things*, 2 Cor. 6. 10. Thus you ſee how deſirable it is for its own excellency.

2. And as it is deſirable for the ſweetneſs of its own enjoyment, ſo alſo from the *difficulty of its attainment*; all excellencies are lockt up under many difficulties; but none like this, it is indeed eaſie to preſume an intereſt in Chriſt, and cheat a mans own ſoul with a dream and fancy of our own Creation; but ſure it's hard to get a ſealed clear title to Chriſt and his benefits; and there be among others three things that make it difficult.

(1.) The corruptions that remain, and daily work in the beſt hearts, theſe are evermore puzling and ſcaring the poor ſoul with fears and doubts about its condition. Grace teacheth men due ſeverity to themſelves, and fear of their own deceitfulneſs makes them think no hearts are like their hearts, eſpecially whilſt

whilst they compare other mens outside with their own inside, as generally they do. O, how do our own corruptions every moment raise mists and clouds, that it is a wonder we ever should have one clear beam of assurance shining into such hearts as our hearts are.

(2.) The multitudes of mistakes and cheats that are frequently committed and found in this matter, makes upright hearts the more suspicious and doubtful of their own conditions. O, when they read *Matth. 7.22.* that many will say to Christ in that day, *Lord, Lord, we have Prophesied in thy Name*, &c. It scares them lest they also be deceived.

(3.) The grand importance of the matter makes poor souls fearful of concluding certainly about it. O, when a man considers that the whole weight of his eternal happiness or misery depends upon the resolution of these Questions: Am I in Christ? or am I not? It will make him tremble to determine. In a word, assurance is not in our power, or at our command. There be many holy humble, diligent, and longing souls, to whom it is denied. It is arbitrarily dispensed by the pleasure of the spirit, to whom he will, and such favours are rare

even among true believers, the more therefore it is to be valued and desired by all, as the Spouse doth in this place: And so much to the first thing. Upon what account the assurance of Christs love is so desirable in the eyes of Christians.

2. In the last place, let us consider how this mercy which is so desirable, may be obtained; and this is our proper work and business at this time.

You are now come to a sealing Ordinance, instituted on purpose for this noble end and Use. O, that we could pray and plead for it as the Spouse here doth. *Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm, for love is strong as death, jealousie is cruel as the grave,* &c. Now in order to the attainment of this most desirable mercy, take a few necessary hints of your present work and duty in the following directions.

1. *Di-*

1. *Direction.*

Would you be well ſecured of Chriſts love to you, and that you are ſet as a ſeal upon his heart; then exerciſe and manifeſt more love to Chriſt, and let him be much upon your hearts. If it be clear to you, that you have true love to Jeſus Chriſt, you need not at all to doubt, but you are in his heart and in his love. *I love them that love me*, Prov. 8. 17. And ſurely you have now before you the greateſt motive in the world, to inflame your love to Jeſus Chriſt. Behold him as he here repreſented to you, wounded for your iniquities, yea, ſacrificed to the wrath of God for your Peace, Pardon, and Salvation. O, what manner of love is this? Behold how he loved thee! If Chriſt's love draw forth thine, it will ſo far clear thy intereſt in his love, as it ſhall engage thy heart in love to him. 1.

2. *Di-*

2. *Direction.*

But seeing the activity of your love will be according to the activity of your faith, therefore in the next place I advise you to make it the main work and business of this hour to exercise your faith upon Jesus Christ; set your selves this day to believe; the more strong the direct acts of your faith shall be, the more clear and comfortable its reflex acts are like to be. There are three distinct offices or imployments for your faith at this Table, *viz.*

1. To realize
2. To apply
3. To infer from

} the sufferings of Jesus Christ.

(1.) Realize the sufferings of Christ for you, and behold them here represented in a true glass to the eye of faith. See you that Bread broken, and that Wine poured out? As sure as this is so, Jesus Christ endured the Cross, suffered the Wrath of the great and terrible God in his Soul, and in his Body upon the cursed Tree, for and in the room of poor Condemned Sinners. Your faith for

for the one hath as much, yea, more certainty, than your ſenſe hath for the other. *This is a faithful ſaying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jeſus Chriſt came into the world to ſave Sinners*, 1 Tim. 1. 15. and without controverſie, great is the myſtery of Godlineſs, God was manifeſt in the fleſh, &c. 1 Tim. 3. 16.

2. Apply the ſufferings of Chriſt this day to thine own ſoul. Believe all this to be done & ſuffered in thy room, and for thy ſake: He offered not this Sacrifice for his own ſins, but ours, *Iſa.* 53. 9. *Heb.* 7. 27. He was Incarnate for you. *Iſa.* 9. 6. *For us a Child is born; to us a Son is given.* His death was for you, and in your ſtead, *Gal.* 3. 13. *He was made a Curſe for us*; and when he roſe from the dead, *he roſe for our juſtification*, Rom. 4. 25. and now he is in glory at the right hand of God, he is there for us, *Heb.* 7. 25. *He ever lives to make Interceſſion for us*: It was the pride, paſſion, earthlineſs, and unbelief of thy heart which Jeſus Chriſt groaned, bled, and died to procure a pardon for.

3. Infer from the ſufferings of Chriſt thoſe concluſions of faith that tend to aſſurance. As thus, Did Chriſt die for me when I was an Enemy? then ſure-

ly

ly being reconciled, I shall be saved by his life, *Rom.* 5. 10. Again, Is Christ dead for me, then I shall never die eternally: Nothing shall separate me from the love of God, it is Christ that died, *Rom.* 8. 34.

3. *Direction.*

Mourn over all those sins that cause the Lord to hide his Face from your souls. Have you grieved the Spirit by your sin, O, be grieved for it this day at your very hearts, cover the Table of the Lord with tears: Look upon him whom you have pierced, and mourn as for an only Son. Though there be no *merit*, yet there is much *mercy* in a broken heart for sin; and there is no such advantage to get your hearts broken as this is, which is now before you. When the showeth of Repentance is fallen, the Heavens over thee may be clear, and the Sun shine out in its brightness upon thy soul.

shower

4. Di-

*4. Direction.*

In a word, pour out thy ſoul to God in hearty deſires for a ſealed and clear intereſt in his love this day; tell him, it is a mercy thou valueſt above life, *Thy favour is better than life*, Pſal. 63. 3. Tell him, thou art not able to live with the jealouſies and ſuſpicions of his love; thou art but a torment to thy ſelf, whilſt thy intereſt in his love abides under a cloud. Beſeech him to pity thy poor afflicted ſoul, which hath lain down and riſen ſo long with theſe fears and tremblings, and been a ſtranger to comfort for ſo many days. Tell him how weak thy hands have been, and ſtill are in duties of obedience, for want of this ſtrength and encouragement. Engage thy ſoul to him this day to be more active, chearful, and fruitful in his ſervice, if it will pleaſe him now to free thee from thoſe fears and doubts that have clogg'd thee in all thy former duties. O, cry unto him in the words, and with the

the deep ſenſe of the Spouſe in this Text. Set me as a ſeal upon thy heart, as a ſeal upon thine arm, for love is ſtrong as death, jealouſie is cruel as the grave, the coals thereof are coals of fire, &c.

THE

# THE TWELFTH MEDITATION UPON

Eph. 3. 19. ——*And to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge.*

THE knowledge of Christ, and of his love is deservedly in this place set down among the *desiderata Christianorum*, the most desirable enjoyments of Believers in this world. This love of Christ had centred the Apostles heart, he was swallowed up in the meditation and admiration of it, and would have all hearts inflamed and affected with it, as his was.

Some

Some think the Apostle speaks *Extatically* in this place, and know not how to make the parts of his discourse consistent with each other, when he puts them upon endeavours to know that love of Christ, which himself confesses to pass knowledge.

But though his heart was ravished with the love of Christ, yet there is no contradiction or inconsistency in his discourse. He doth earnestly desire for the *Ephesians*, that they may know the love of Christ, (*i. e.*) that they might experimentally know his love, which passeth knowledge; that is, as some expound it, all other sorts and kinds of knowledge; yea, and all knowledge of Christ which is not practical and experimental.

Or thus, Labour to get the clearest and fullest *apprehensive* knowledge of Christ and his love, that is attainable in this world, though you cannot arrive to a perfect *comprehensive* knowledge of either. *Mens humana hoc & capit, & non capit; atque in eo capit quod rapitur in admirationem*, as others reconcile it. The note from it is,

Doct.

## Doct.

*That the love of Christ surpasses and transcends the knowledge of the most illuminated Believers.*

The love of Christ is too deep for any created understanding to fathom; it is unsearchable love, and it is so in divers respects.

It is unsearchable in respect of its *antiquity*. No Understanding of man can trace it back to its first spring: it flows from one Eternity to another: We receive the fruits and effects of it now; but O, how ancient is that root that bears them! He loved us before this world was made, and will continue so to do, when it shall be reduced into ashes. It is said, *Prov.* 8. 30, 31. *Then he gave the Sea his decree, when he appointed the foundations of the Earth, then was I by him, as one brought up with him, and I was daily his delight, rejoycing always before him, rejoycing in the habitable parts of his Earth, and my delights were with the Sons of men.* 1.

The

2. The *freeneſs* of the love of Chriſt paſſes knowledge: No man knows, nor can any words expreſs how free the love of Chriſt to his people is: It is ſaid *Iſa.* 55. 8. *My thoughts are not your thoughts.* The meaning is, My Grace, Mercy, and Love to you is one thing, as it is in my thoughts, and quite another thing when it comes into your thoughts. In my thoughts it is like it ſelf, free, rich, and unchangeable; but in your thoughts it is limitted and narrowed, pincht in within your ſtraight and narrow conceptions, that it is not like it ſelf, but altered according to the model and platform of Creatures, according to which, you draw it in your minds. Alas, we do but alter and ſpoil his love, when we think there is any thing in us, or done by us, that can be a motive, inducement, or recompence to it. His love is ſo free, that it pitched it ſelf upon us, before we had any lovelineſs in us at all. *When we were in our blood, he ſaid unto us, live, and that was the time of love.* It did not ſtay till we had our Ornaments upon us, but embraced us in our blood, in our moſt loath-

loathſome ſtate; and of all ſeaſons, that is the ſeaſon of love, the choſen time of love, *Ezek.* 16. 7, 8. Chriſt loved us not upon the account of any fore-ſeen excellency in us, or upon any expectation of recompence from us: Nay, he loved us not only without, but againſt our deſerts. Nothing in nature is found ſo free as the love of Chriſt is; our thoughts therefore of this love going beyond all examples and inſtances that are found among men, quickly loſe themſelves in an immenſe Ocean of free grace, where they can find neither bank nor bottom.

The *bounty* and *liberality* of the love of Chriſt to his People, paſſeth knowledge. Who can number or value the fruits of his love? They are more than the Sands upon the Sea-ſhore. It would weary the arm of an *Angel* to write down the thouſandth part of the effects of his love, which come to the ſhare of any particular Chriſtian in this World. Who can tell how many ſins it pardons? *The free gift is of many offences unto juſtification*, Rom. 5. 16. How many dangers it prevents, or

how many wants it supplies? This we know, that of all his fulneſs, we all receive grace for grace, *Joh.* 1. 16. But how full of grace Chriſt is, and how many mercies have, and ſhall flow to us out of that Fountain of love, this is unknown to men, to the beſt, wiſeſt, and moſt obſervant men. O! if the records of the mercies of our lives were or could be gather'd and kept, what vaſt volumns would they ſwell to? 'Tis true indeed, you have the total ſum given you in 1 *Cor.* 3. 22. *All are yours*, but it is ſuch a number as no man can number.

4. The *Conſtancy* of Chriſt's love to his People paſſeth knowledge: No length of time, no diſtance of place, no change of condition, either with him, or us; can poſſibly make any alteration of his affections towards us. He is the ſame yeſterday, to day, and for ever, *Heb.* 13. 8. It is noted alſo by the *Evangeliſt*, Joh. 13. 1. *That having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them to the end.* 'Tis true, his condition is altered, he is no more in this world converſing with his People, as he did once in the days of his Fleſh:

He

He is now at the right hand of God, in the highest glory; but yet his heart is the same that ever it was, for love and tenderness to his People. Our conditions also are often altered in this world, but his love suffers no alteration. Yea, which is much more admirable, we do many things daily that grieve him, and offend him, yet he takes not away his loving kindness from us, nor suffers his faithfulness to fail. We pour out so much cold water of unkindness and provocation as is enough to coole and quench any love in the world, except His love; but notwithstanding all, he continues unchangable in love to us. This *Peter* found, notwithstanding that great offence of his: No sooner was the Lord risen from the dead, but he greets him in the style of his former love and ancient respect. *Go tell the Disciples, and tell* Peter.

So then, the love of Christ is a love transcending all Creature-love, and humane Understanding. We read in *Rom.* 5. 7, 8. *That peradventure, for a good man, some would even dare to die*: but we never find where any beside

Jesus

Jesus Christ would lay down his life for Enemies. It is recorded as an unparallel'd instance of love in *Damon* and *Pithias*, the two *Sicilian Philosophers*, that each had courage enough to die for his friend; for one of them being Condemned to die by the *Tyrant*, and desiring to give the last farewell to his Family, his Friend went into Prison for him, as his Surety to die for him, if he returned not at the appointed time; but he did not die; yea, he had such a confidence in his Friend, that he would not suffer him by default to die for him; and if he had, yet he had died for his Friend: But such was the love of Christ, that it did not only put him into danger of death, but put him actually unto death; yea, the worst of deaths, and that for his Enemies. O what manner of love is this! We read of the love that *Jacob* had for *Rachel*, and how he endured both the cold of Winter, and heat of Summer for her sake: But what is this to the love of Jesus, who for us endured the heat of God's Wrath? Beside, she was Beautiful, but we unlovely. *David* wish'd for *Absolom* his Son,

Son, *Would God I had died for thee.* But it was but a wish, and had it come to the proof, *David* would have shrinkt from death, for all the affection he bare his beautiful Son. But Christ actually gave his life for us, and did not only wish he had done it. O love, transcending the love of Creatures, yea, and surmounting all Creature-knowledge.

*The Uses follow.*

If the love of Christ pass knowledge, O! then admire it, yea, live and die in the wonder and admiration of the love of Christ. As it is a sign of great weakness to admire small and common things, so it speaks great stupidity not to be affected with great and unusual things. O Christian, if thou be one that converseſt with the thoughts of this love, thou canſt not but admire it; and the more thou ſtudieſt, the more ſtill wilt thou be aſtoniſhed at it. And among the many Wonders that will appear in the love of Christ, theſe two will moſt of all affect thee, *viz.* 1.

1. That ever it pitcht at firſt on thee.
2. That it is not by ſo many ſins quencht towards thee.

(1.) 'Tis admirable that ever the love of Chriſt pitcht at firſt upon thee; for are there not millions in the world of ſweeter tempers, and better conſtitutions than thy ſelf, whom it hath paſt by, and yet imbraced thee? *Lord* (ſaid the Diſciples) *how is it that thou wilt manifeſt thy ſelf unto us, and not unto the world?* Joh. 14. 22. Surely he did not ſet his love upon thee, nor chuſe thee, becauſe thou waſt better than others, but becauſe he loved thee.

(2.) It is admirable that his love to thee is not extinguiſhed by ſo many ſins as thou haſt committed againſt him. Lay thy hand, Chriſtian, this day, upon thy heart, and be-think thy ſelf how many have been the provocations, wrongs, and diſhonours thou haſt been guilty of againſt thy God, and that ſince he called

called thee by his grace, and ſet his love upon thee: What! and yet love thee ſtill! Yea, notwithſtanding all, he is ſtill thy God, and loves thee with an unchangeable love. O! with how many notwithſtandings is his love continued to thy ſoul? All this is juſt matter of admiration and wonder for ever.

Is the love of Chriſt paſt knowledge? an unſearchable love? then learn whence and why it is that the ſouls of Believers never are, nor can be tired in beholding and enjoying Jeſus Chriſt. We uſe to ſay, one thing is tireſome; and it is very true, if it be an earthly thing, it will be ſo, how ſweet or excellent ſoever it ſeems at firſt; and the reaſon is, becauſe the beſt Creature-enjoyment is but a ſhallow thing, and a few thoughts will ſound it to the bottom; and there being no ſupply of new matter to feed the hungry ſoul upon, it is quickly ſated and cloyed with the repetition of the ſame thing over and over, but it is far otherwiſe in Chriſt; for though he be but one, yet in that

one thing, all things are virtually and eminently contained, ſo that every day he ſeems a new Chriſt for ſweetneſs, and yet is the ſame Chriſt ſtill. And in Heaven the Redeemed ſhall view him with as much wonder, and love him with as much ardour after millions of years, as they did at their firſt ſight of him. O! there is no bottom in the love of Chriſt; it paſſeth knowledge.

3. In a word, beſtow your beſt and chiefeſt love upon Chriſt, whoſe love to you paſſeth all knowledge. Let no creature be loved equally with Chriſt, but as his love to you paſſeth all Creature-love, ſo let yours to him be a matchleſs love.

Believer, Chriſt loves thee with an unſearchable love, he loves thee more than the deareſt friend, that is, as thine own ſoul loves thee. He loves thee more than thou loveſt thy Child, or the Wife of thy boſom; more than thy ſoul loves thy body, with which it is ſo intimately united: And wilt thou content thy ſelf with ſuch poor narrow remiſs affections to Jeſus Chriſt.

O look upon him this day in his red Garments, behold him in the ſtrength of his love breaking through the Curſe of the Law, the Wrath of God, the Agonies of Death, to bring home the fruits of his eternal love to thy ſoul. And whilſt thou art beholding and muſing upon it, let thy heart melt, thy eyes drop, and thy very ſoul cry out.

Behold how he loved me!

*Bleſſed be God for Jeſus Chriſt.*

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FINIS.

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# A HYMN UPON Rom. 5. ver. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11.

Verſe

6. *When we were deſtitute of ſtrength,*
*our ſelves to help or ſave,*
*Chriſt for ungodlineſs at length,*
*his Life a Ranſom gave.*

7. *For one that's Righteous, we would*
*to lay our life to ſtake,*
*And for a good man, it were much,*
*ſuch an exchange to make.*

8. *But God his matchleſs love commends*
*in that Chriſt Jeſus dies*
*For us, when we were not his friends,*
*but wretched Enemies.*

9. *Much more being justified and free,*
*through his own Blood from sin,*
*From wrath to come we sav'd shall be,*
*even by the life of him.*

10. *For if when Enemies for us,*
*Christs death did end the strife:*
*Much more when reconciled thus,*
*He I save us by his life.*

11. *Yea, more than so, we triumph now*
*in God with one Accord,*
*Having receiv'd Attonement through*
*Christ Jesus our own Lord.*

*Wherefore to him, who is the first*
*begotten of the dead,*
*Who over earthly Princes must,*
*be supream Lord and Head:*

*Even to him who lov'd us so,*
*to wash us in his Blood,*
*And make us Kings, and Priests unto*
*his Father, and his God.*

*To him Dominion therefore,*
*by us be given, when*
*This present world shall be no more:*
*To which, we say,* Amen.

THE

## *ERRATA.*

PAge 6. line 17. for *dead*, read *death-bed*; p. 36. l. 4. for *wrapt* r. *rapt*; p. 46. l. 14. for *effect*, r. *effect*; p. 55. l. 15. add, *is the ſpoile*; p. 64. l. 16. for *grounded* r. *ungrounded*; p. 99. l. 26. for *hollowed*, r. *hallowed*; p. 128. l. 24. for *are* r. *is*; p. 135. l. 29. for *and made*, r. *that make*; p. 140. l. 11. for *your* r. *their*; p. 141. l. 6. for *any*, r. *my*; p. 152. l. 3. blot out *might*; p. 171. l. 25. r. *applying*; p. 185. l. 26. r. *feaſt*; p. 206. l. 19. r. *ſhower*; p. 214. l. 2. blot out *all*; p. 216. l. 19. for *unto* r. *under*.